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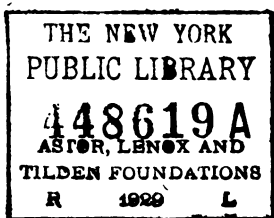


A
C O L L E C T I O N
OF THE MOST ESTEEMED
F A R C E S
A N D
E N T E R T A I N M E N T S
PERFORMED ON THE
B R I T I S H S T A G E.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

EDINBURGH,
Printed for C. ELLIOT, PARLIAMENT-SQUARE.

M,DCC,LXXXIII.



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To the PUBLIC.

THE Fourth Volume of this COLLECTION of FARCES makes its appearance about the time promised; and, as was formerly announced, will terminate the publication for the present.

Notwithstanding, the Publisher is determined at some future period to add two or three Volumes, if he shall be so fortunate as to obtain permission from the respectable authors, to insert several excellent pieces which he has in view; the publication of which would highly gratify the public, but could not without such permission be attempted with any degree of fairness or propriety. If he has already taken any such liberty, he is sorry for it; and hopes the distance, and in most cases the want of knowledge, of the gentlemen's residence, will plead his apology.

At the same time, he would not wish it to be thought he is making any very improper request; it being a well-known fact amongst authors and booksellers, that the first season of publication of all dramatic pieces, especially of the *petit kind*, is the only period from which any advantage is derived to either. Any gentleman having no particular objection to the insertion of his pieces in the subsequent volumes, will confer a particular obligation on Mr Elliot by signifying as much to him by letter.

The uncommon success this undertaking has met with from the Public, demands the Publisher's warmest acknowledgments: and he flatters himself that the contents of the present volume will be found of equal, if not superior merit to any of the former; while the improvement of marking with inverted commas those parts usually omitted in the representation, will, it is presumed, serve to stamp an additional value on the Collection.

EDINBURGH, *June 1783.*

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THE
TWIN S;
OR,
WHICH IS WHICH?
IN THREE ACTS.

Altered from SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY OF ERRORS.

By MR WOODS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

SHAKESPEARE'S *Comedy of Errors* has never obtained a rank on the stage equal with the other comedies of that excellent author. Without enumerating the various causes that might be assigned of its indifferent reception, the editor contents himself with mentioning only *one*, as it explains the motive from which he undertook both the former and the present alteration:—The frequent repetition of similar blunders, which are occasioned by the likeness between the *Antipholises* and *Dramatis*, and are continued through five long acts, produces an intricacy that perplexes, and a sameness that tires, an audience. With a view to remedy these defects, the editor, a few years ago, reduced the comedy to three acts, and it was performed, as an after-piece, with much approbation; but as his veneration for the author made him retain too many of the scenes, there still existed in the comedy, when altered, too much of the confusion and uniformity of the original.—He has therefore ventured to make further alterations; and flatters himself the piece, as it now stands, will be considered not an unacceptable addition to the list of Theatrical Entertainments.

VOL. IV.

A

Dur

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Edin. 1790.

<i>Duke of Ephesus,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Hallion.
<i>Egeon,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Smith.
<i>Antipho's of Ephesus,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Woods.
<i>Antipholis of Syracuse,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Cautherley,
<i>Dromio of Ephesus,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Bailey.
<i>Dromio of Syracuse,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Chalmers.
<i>Angelo,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Lane.
<i>Ballibazar,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Taylor.
<i>First Merchant,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Lyon.
<i>Second Merchant,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Wood.
<i>Doctor Pinch,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Charteris,
<i>Officer,</i>	-	-	-	Mr Colby.
<i>Æmilie,</i>	-	-	-	Mrs Montague.
<i>Adriana,</i>	-	-	-	Mrs Smith.
<i>Luciana,</i>	-	-	-	Miss Mills.
<i>Hostess,</i>	-	-	-	Miss Bailey.

SCENE, *Ephesus.*

A C T I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter ANTIPHOLIS of SYRACUSE, First MERCHANT and DROMIO.

First MERCHANT.

THEREFORE give out you are of Epidamnum—

For by a law in force it is enacted,

If any stranger, born in Syracuse,

Come to our port of Ephesus, he dies;

Unless, indeed, he be possess'd of wealth

Sufficient to discharge a heavy forfeiture.

'There is your money that I had to keep.

Ant. of Syr. Go, bear it to the Centaur where we host,

And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee:

Get thee away.

Dro. of Syr. Many a man would take you at your word,
And go indeed, having so good a means.—[*Exit Dromio.*]

Ant. of Syr. A trusty villain, Sir, that very oft
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.

1 Mer. If't please you, Sir, I now will claim your
promise,

To trust me with that part of your adventures
Which yet I have not heard.

Ant. of Syr. — In Syracuse,
As I have told you, was my father born;

And

And, by the prosp'rous voyages he made
 To Epidamnum, grew a wealthy merchant.
 To share his happiness, he took a wife—
 Who on a visit to my father's friends
 In Epidamnum, with him cross'd the sea;
 And there soon gave him, at a single birth,
 Two sons—that so resembled each the other,
 They could not be distinguish'd.—Stranger still,
 In the same house, and at the self-same hour,
 A poor mean woman was delivered
 Of such another burden—two male twins,
 That, like my father's boys, (myself and brother)
 Puzzled their parents to tell which was which.

1. *Mer.* 'Twas strange, indeed!

Ant. of Syr. These did my father purchase of the woman,
 Designing them attendants on his sons;
 But soon returning home to Syracuse,
 A tempest rose, that dash'd our bark in pieces.
 My mother, brother, and his little slave,
 On a small raft the sailors had prepar'd,
 Were driven by the waves.
 Upon another plank, my hapless father,
 Myself, and th' other infant-twin were bound;
 And being next day seen by friendly voyagers,
 They sav'd, and brought us into Syracuse.—
 At eighteen years I undertook to search
 After my mother's and my brother's fate.
 Five summers have I rang'd in distant climes,
 And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus,
 In hopes to find them.—But in vain I seek,
 And seeking them, unhappy lose myself.—

1 *Mer.* I take an interest, Sir, in your misfortunes:
 I am now engag'd to certain friends on business;
 But soon again, at five o'clock, so please you,
 I'll meet with you upon the mart.—

Ant. of Syr. Till then, farewell.—[1 *Mer. exits.*

Enter Dromio of Ephesus.

What now—how chance thou art return'd so soon?

Dro. of E. Return'd so soon! rather approach'd too late.
 The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit,
 The clock has stricken one by the town-clock—
 My mistress made it two upon my cheek.

62 THE T W I N S ; or,

Ant. of S. Thank me, Sir! For what?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.

Ant. of S. Well, Sir, learn to jest in good time. There's a time for all things.

Dro. of S. I durst have deny'd that, before you were so choleric.

Ant. of S. But soft, who wafts us yonder?

Enter Adriana and Luciana.

Adr. Ay, ay, Antipholis, look strange and frown—
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects;
I've lost thy heart—I am a slighted thing—
I am now not Adriana, nor thy wife!

Ant. of S. What means all this?—
Wife! said she, Dromio?

Dro. of S. Yes, Sir, and I suppose the other's *mine*.

Luc. Fie, brother, how the world is chang'd with you!
When were you wont to use my filter thus?
She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner.

Dro. of S. By me!

Adr. By thee—and didst thou not return,
That he did buffet thee, and in his blows
Deny'd me for his wife?

Ant. of S. Did you converse, Sir, with this gentlewoman?

Dro. of S. I, Sir?—I never saw her till this time.

Ant. of S. Villain, thou liest; for just such words as her's
Didst thou deliver me on this very spot.

Dro. of S. Sir, I never spoke with her in all my life!

Ant. of S. How can she then thus call us by our names,
Unless, it be by inspiration?—

Dro. of S. Yes, 'tis by conjuration.

Adr. How ill agrees it with your character
To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave,
Abetting him to thwart me in my mood;
Fie, husband, fie!—

Ant. of S. What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?
What, was I marry'd to her in my sleep?

Adr. Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,
Nor shall you leave me thus, Antipholis;
I see you want to put a trick upon me.
Come, Sir, to dinner; Dromio, keep the gate.—
Husband, I'll keep you to myself to-day,

[*Leaning fondly upon him,*
And

And punish you for seeming not to know me.

Luc. Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

Dro. of S. Yes, Madam, when I know where 'tis your lodge.—

Adr. Sirrah, if any ask you for your master, Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter : Come, sister—Dromio, play the porter well.

Dr. of S. I'm to be porter, master, at the gate !

Adr. Come, come, my love.—

Luc. Brother, we dine too late.

[*Exit Antipholis between Adriana and Luciana.*]

Dro. of S. [*Looking after them.*] This is the fairy-land.
O spite of spights,

We surely are to dine with elves and sprights.

Well, if they give me not enchanted food,

I'll prove my courage and my stomach good. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *The Street before the House of Antipholis of Ephesus.*

Enter Antipholis of Ephesus, Dromio of Ephesus, Angelo, and Balthazar.

Ant. of E. Good signior Angelo, you must excuse us, My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours.

Say that I linger'd with you at your shop,

To see the making of the toy I spoke for.

But here's a drunken slave wou'd face me down

He met me on the mart, and that I beat him,

And charg'd him with a thousand marks in gold.

Dro. of E. Indeed you did, Sir;

If my skin were parchment, and the blows you gave me were ink, your own hand-writing wou'd bear witness to it.

Ant. of E. Sirrah, you are an ass.

Dro. of E. Yes, 'tis plain I am a beast of burden.

[*Feeling his shoulders.*]

Ant. of E. Gentlemen, come on—I wish our cheer within May answer my good will, and your good welcome.

Dromio, go on, and bid them let us in.

Dro. of E. Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian!

Dro. of S. [*within.*] Drone, malt-horse, capon, cockcomb, idiot!—

Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for such store—when one is one too many?—

Thou

8 T H E T W I N S; or,

Thou mistak'st the house, go get thee from our gate.

Dro. of E. What fool is made our porter?—My master stays in the street!

Dro. of S. Let him walk from whence he came, then, lest he catch cold in his feet.

Ant. of E. Who talks within there?—Ho, open the door.

Dro. of S. When, Sir, can you tell?

Ant. of E. What can this mean?—

What art thou that keep'st me out of my house?

Dro. of S. The porter for this time, Sir, and my name is Dromio.

Ant. of E. Dromio!

Dro. of S. Even he, Sir.—

Dro. of E. O villain,

Thou hast stol'n both my office and my name—

Wou'd thou hadst the beating that belongs to 'em.

Ant. of E. Sure, I but dream!—If, as thou say'st, thou'rt Dromio,

Go send thy mistress hither.

Dro. of S. Sir, my mistress is at present engaged with my master.

Ant. of E. The devil!

Dro. of E. Master, knock the door hard.

Dro. of S. Let him knock till it ake.

[*Antipholis knocks, and music plays within.*]

Ant. of E. What do I hear? Music!—

Dro. of S. Yes, you may dance, Sir—if you like the tune.

Ant. of E. Whoe'er thou art, thou shalt repent this insolence!—

Adr. [within.] Who's that at the door that keeps all this noise?

Ant. of E. O, are you there, wife?—

Adr. Your wife, Sir knave! since when, I pray?

Hence, from the door; you have no business here.

Ant. of E. Why, don't you know me?—

Adr. No, I thank Heav'n!—go where you're better welcome;

I have no speech for drunkards.

Dro. of S. No, I told you—here we are better employ'd.

Ant. of E. This is beyond all patience!

Go

Go fetch me something, I'll break open the door.

Dro. of S. Break any thing here, and I'll break your knave's pate. —

Ant. of E. [*music again.*] Fetch me an iron crow directly. —

Bal. Stay, Dromio—and have patience, Sir —
Herein you war against your reputation. —

Then let us to the tavern all to dinner;
And about evening come yourself alone,
To know the reason of this strange restraint.

Ant. of E. You have prevail'd in part. —

I know a wench of excellent discourse;
My wife, but I protest without desert,
Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal;
To her will we to dinner.—Get you home, [*To Angelo,*
And fetch the ring—by this I know 'tis made—
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porcupine;
For there's the house—and there will I bestow it
Upon my pretty hostess;—good Sir, make haste.

Ang. I'll meet you there in less than half an hour.

[*Exit Angelo.*

Ant. of E. Do so. [*Music again, and a loud laugh in the house.*] And for this jest of my fair dame's,
I'll punish her with my neglect and scorn. —

[*Exeunt Antipholus and Balthazar.*

Dro. of E. Oh that my master had unlock'd the door
with an iron crow—then would I have pluck'd a crow
with that knave within. [*Exit.*

A C T II.

SCENE. *A Chamber in the house of ANTIPHOLUS of EPHESUS.*

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of SYRACUSE.

SURE all is witchcraft! I've been entertain'd
As lord and master of a heap of treasure. —
Just now a goldsmith press'd on me this ring,
Refusing payment till some future time.
Some men wou'd think them blest to be so courted,
As I have been, and by so fair a lady;
But something in my bosom makes me shun

Her

Her charms, and shudder at her fond endearments.

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

Why how now, Dromio, where run'st thou so fast?

Dro. of S. Do you know me, Sir? am I Dromio?
am I your man? am I myself?

Ant. of S. Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, ~~thou~~
art thyself.

Dro. of S. I am an ass, I am a woman's man—and
besides myself.

Ant. of S. What woman's man, and how besides thyself?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, besides myself, I am due to a
woman; one that claims me, one that haunts me—one
that will have me.

Ant. of S. What claim lays she to thee?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, such a claim as you would lay
to your horse—she would have me as a beast:—not that
I being a beast, she wou'd have me; but that she being
a very beastly creature, lays claim to me.

Ant. of S. What is she?

Dro. of S. A very reverend body—for she has a beard
like a goat. I have but lean luck in the match, and yet
she's a wondrous fat marriage?

Ant. of S. How dost thou mean a fat marriage?

Dro. of S. Marry, Sir, she's the kitchen-wench, and
all greafe. I know not what use to put her to but to
make a lamp of her, and run from her by her own light.
I warrant her rags and the tallow in them will burn a
Lapland winter: if she lives till Doomsday, she'll blaze
a week longer than the rest of the world.

Ant. of S. Ha! ha! ha! What complexion is she of?

Dro. of S. Swart, like my shoe—but her face no-
thing like so clean kept.

Ant. of S. What's her name?

Dro. of S. Nell, Sir;—but her name and three quar-
ters (that is, an ell and three quarters) will not mea-
sure her from hip to hip.

Ant. of S. Then she bears some breadth?

Dro. of S. No longer from head to foot, than from hip
to hip: she is spherical like a globe. Sir, this drudge,
or diviner, laid claim to me; call'd me Dromio, swore I
was assur'd to her; told me what privy marks I had
about me, as the marks of my shoulder, the mole in my
neck,

WHICH IS WHICH? 11

neck, the great wart on my left arm, that I, amaz'd, ran from her as a witch.

Ant. of S. Go, haste to the road,
And if the wind blow any way from shore,
I will not harbour in this town to-night:—
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,
Where I will walk till thou return to me.
Haste, Dromio, haste.

[*Exit.*

Dro. of S. Yes, Sir—
As from a bear a man would run for life,
I fly the monster, that wou'd be my wife.

[*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter Angelo, Second Merchant, and an Officer.

2 *Mer.* You know since Pentecost the sum is due;
Therefore make present satisfaction,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

Ang. Even just the sum that I do owe to you
Is growing to me by Antipholis;
Please you but walk with me down to his house,
I will discharge my bond, and thank you too.

Officer. That labour you may save; see where he comes.
Enter Antipholis of Ephesus and Dromio of Ephesus.

Ant. of E. While I go to the goldsmith's house, go thou
and buy a rope's end; that will I bestow among my
wife's confederates, for locking me out of doors to-day.

[*Exit Dromio.*

Ant. of E. [*seeing Angelo.*] A man is well help up
that trusts to you.

I promis'd me your presence and the jewel.

Ang. Saving your merry humour, here's the note of it,
Which does amount to three odd ducats more
Than I stand debted to this gentleman:
I pray you see him presently discharg'd;
For he is bound to sea, and stays but for it.

Ant. of E. I am not furnish'd with the present money;
Besides, I have some business in the town:
Good signior, take the stranger to my house,
And with you take the ring, and bid my wife
Disburse the sum on the receipt thereof;
Perchance, I will be there as soon as you.

Ang. Then you will bring the ring to her yourself?

Ant.

Ant. of E. No; bear it with you, lest I come not ti
enough.

Ang. Well, Sir, I will: have you the ring about y

Ant. of E. An if I have not, Sir, I hope you have,
Or else you may return without your money.

Ang. Nay, come, I pray you, Sir, give me the rin
Both wind and tide stay for this gentleman,
And I, to blame, have held him here too long.

Ant. of E. What now, you use this dalliance to exc
Your breach of promise to the Porcupine.

2 Mer. The hour steals on; I pray you, Sir, dispat

Ang. You hear how he importunes me; the ring—

Ant. of E. Why, give it to my wife, and fetch y
money.

Ang. You know I gave it you, not half an hour sin

Ant. of E. You gave me none; you wrong me mu
to say so.

Ang. You wrong me more, Sir, in denying it.
Consider how it stands upon my credit.

2 Mer. Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

Offi. I do, and charge you in the duke's name to ob

Ang. This touches me in reputation!—

Either consent to pay the sum for me,

Or I'll attach you by this officer.

Ant. of E. Consent to pay for that I never had!

Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou dar'st.—

Ang. Here is thy fee—arrest him, officer.

I wou'd not spare my brother in this case.

Offi. I do arrest you, Sir; you hear the suit.

Ant. of E. I do obey thee till I give thee bail;—

But, firrah, you shall buy this sport as dear

As all the metal in your shop will answer.

Ang. Sir, Sir, I shall have law in Ephesus,

To your notorious shame, I doubt it not.

[*Exeunt Angelo and Merchant*]

Enter Dromio of Syracuse.

Dro. of S. Master, there is a bark of Epidamnum,

That stays but for her owner and yourself,

Then, Sir, she bears away.—

Ant. of E. How now! the slave is either drunk or m
What ship of Epidamnum stays for me?

Dro. of S. A ship you sent me to, to hire wastage.

A

Ant. of E. Thou drunken slave, I sent thee for a rope,
And told thee to what purpose, and what end.

Dro. of S. You sent me for a rope's end, as soon;
You sent me to the bay, Sir, for a bark.

Ant. of E. I will debate this matter at more leisure,
To Adriana, villain, hie thee strait;
Give her this key, and tell her in the desk
There is a purse of ducats,—let her send it;
Tell her I am arrested in the street,
And that shall bail me—hie thee, slave, be gone!
On, officer, to prison, till it come.

[*Exeunt Antipholis and Officer.*]

Dro. of S. (solus.) To Adriana?—that is where we
dined in the next street—but does he think she will give
him a purse of ducats for eating up her provisions?—
No, no, he was not civil enough for that.—In my
simple judgment, he is as mad as a March hare—and so
I shall tell Madam—for go, I must—Would I were out
of this town—though I have met with a number of old
acquaintances—whom indeed I never saw in my life be-
fore—A taylor just now haul'd me into his shop, and took
measure of me for a coat and doublet—then there's the
mountain of flesh that lays claim to my sweet person,
and wou'd fain solace me with her wondrous charms—
For certain they are *all* mad—and if Mrs Adriana sends
the money,—why she will be maddest of 'em all. [*Exit.*]

[*Enter Antipholis of Ephesus and Officer.*]

Ant. of E. Fear me not, man, I will not break away;
I'll give thee, ere I leave thee, so much money,
To warrant thee, as I am 'rested for.
My wife is in a wayward mood to-day,
And will not lightly trust the messenger.
That I should be attached in Ephesus,
I tell you, 'twill sound harshly in her ears.—
Here comes my man—I think he brings the money.

[*Enter Dromio of Ephesus.*]

How now, Sir, have you that I sent you for?

Dro. of E. Yes, Sir, I have it. [*Feeling for it.*]

Ant. of E. 'Tis well, good Dromio.

Dro. of E. Here's that, I warrant you, will pay them
all!

[*Giving a rope.*]

44 THE T W I N S; or,

Ant. of E. But where's the money?
Dro. of E. Why, Sir, I gave the money for the rope.
Ant. of E. Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope!
Dro. of E. I'll serve you, Sir, five hundred at that rate.
Ant. of E. To what end did I send thee home?—
Dro. of E. To a rope's end, Sir—and to that end am I return'd.

Ant. of E. And to that end, Sir, will I welcome thee!
 [Beats Dromio.]

Offi. Good Sir, be patient.

Dro. of E. Nay, 'tis for me to be patient; I am in adversity.

Ant. of E. Thou whorison, senseless villain!—

Dro. of E. I wou'd I were senseless, Sir, that I might not feel your blows.—

Ant. of E. Come, go along, my wife is coming yonder.

Enter Adriana, Luciana, Hostess, Pinch, and Attendants.

Dro. of E. Mistress, *respice finem*, respect your end—or rather beware the rope's end.

Ant. of E. Wilt thou still prate? [Beats him again.]

Luc. It is as you were warn'd—your husband's mad!

Hof. I knew it by his conduct at my house.

Adr. Good Doctor Pinch, I prithee speak to him.

Luc. Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!

Pinch. Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulse.

Ant. of E. There. [Striking him.]

Pinch. He is possess'd—the fiend is strong within him.

Ant. of E. You minion, you, are these your customers?

Did this companion, with the saffron face,

Revel and feast it in my house to-day,

Whilst upon me the guilty doors were shut?

Adr. Oh, husband! heav'n doth know you din'd at home.

Ant. of E. Thou hast brib'd the goldsmith to arrest me too.

Adr. Alas, I sent you money to redeem you

By Dromio here, who came in haste for it.

Dro. of E. Moneybyme! heart and goodwill you might;

But surely, master, not a rag of money.

Ant. of E. Went'st thou not to her for a purse of ducats?

Adr. He came to me, and I deliver'd it.

Luc.

WHICH IS WHICH? 15

Luc. And I am witness with her that she did.

Dro. of E. Heav'n and the rope-maker do bear me witness

That I was sent for nothing but a rope.—

Pinch. Mistress, both man and master are possess'd!

Ant. of E. Say, wherefore didst thou lock me forth to-day?

And why dost thou deny the bag of gold?

Adr. I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.

Dro. of E. And gentle master, I receiv'd no gold;
But I confess—that we were both lock'd out.

Adr. Dissembling villain, thou speak'st false in both.

Ant. of E. Dissembling harlot, thou art false in all;
But with these hands I'll pluck out those false eyes,
That would behold me in this shameful sport.

Adr. Oh bind him, bind him, let him not come near me. [*They bind him.*]

Pinch. More company! his fever now is high!
Bind Dromio, too.

Ant. of E. What, will you murder me?—Thou, officer,
I am thy prisoner, wilt thou suffer them
To make a rescue?

Adr. I will discharge the debt—
Good master doctor, see him safe convey'd
Home to my house—Oh most unhappy day!

Ant. of E. Oh most unhappy strumpet!

Dro. of E. Master,—I am here enter'd in bond for you.
Ah— [*They stop his mouth.*]

Pinch. Both mad—both very mad!—

Adr. Luc. Alas, poor souls! [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

SCENE, *A Street before a Priory.*

Enter ANGELO and Second MERCHANT.

Ang. I'M sorry, Sir, that I have hinder'd you;
But I protest he had the ring of me,
Though most dishonestly he doth deny it.

2 Mer. Speak softly; yonder, as I think, he comes.

Ang. 'Tis so, and that same ring upon his finger.
I'll speak to him.

[Enter Antipholis and Dromio of Syracuse.]

Signior Antipholis, I wonder much
That thou would put me to this shame and trouble ;
That ring you had of me, can you deny it ?

Ant. of S. I think I had ; I never did deny it.

Ang. Yes, that you did, Sir, and foreswore it too.

Mer. Fie on thee, wretch ! 'tis pity that thou liv'st
To walk where any honest men resort.

Ant. of S. Thou art a villain to impeach me thus ;
I'll prove my honour and my honesty
Against thee presently, if thou dar'st to stand.

Mer. I dare, and do defy thee for a villain. [*They fight,*

Enter Adriana, Luciana, Hostess, &c.

Adr. Hold, hurt him not, for heav'n's sake ! he is mad,
Some get within him, take his sword away :
Bind Dromio too.

[*They attempt to disarm him, but he keeps them off.*]

Dro. of S. Run, master, run—for heav'n's sake, take
a house ;

This is some priory—in, or we are spoil'd.

[*Exeunt Antipholis and Dromio to the Priory.*

Adr. Alas, alas, how came they loose again ?

Luc. Let's call more help to have them bound anew.

Enter Lady Abbess from the Priory.

Abb. Be quiet, people, wherefore throng you hither ?

Adr. To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.

Ang. I thought he was not in his perfect wits.

Abb. How long hath this possession held the man ?

Adr. This week he hath been heavy, four, and sad ;
But till this afternoon his passion
Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.

Good people, enter, and lay hold of him.

Abb. No, not a creature enter in my house.—

Adr. Then let your servants bring my husband forth,

Abb. Neither—he took this place for sanctuary ;

And it shall privilege him from your hands,

Till I have brought him to his wits again,

Or lose my labour in essaying it :

Therefore depart, and leave him here with me.

Adr. I will not hence, and leave my husband here,
And ill it doth beseem your holiness
To separate the husband and the wife.

Abb.

WHICH IS WHICH? 17

Abb. Be quiet, and depart; thou shalt not have him.

[Exit Abbess.]

Luc. Complain unto the Duke of this indignity.

Ang. By this, I think, the dial points at five:

Anon, I'm sure the duke himself in person

Comes this way to the melancholy vale,

To see a reverend Syracusan merchant,

Who put unluckily into this bay,

Beheaded publicly for his offence.

Luc. See where they come.

Enter Duke, Eggeon, Jailor, Guards, &c.

Duke. Yet once again proclaim it publicly,

If any friend will pay the sum for him,

He shall not die.

Adr. [kneeling,] Justice, most sacred Duke, against
the Abbess.

Duke. She is a virtuous and a reverend lady;

It cannot be that she has done thee wrong.

Adr. May it please your grace, Antipholis my husband,

This day a desp'rate fit of madness seiz'd him:

Once did I get him bound, and sent him home;

Anon, I know not by what strange escape,

He broke from those that had the guard of him,

And here I met him, drawn upon this merchant—

We strove again to bind him; but he fled

Into this abbey, whither we pursu'd him;

And here the abbess shuts the gate on us,

And will not suffer us to fetch him out.—

Duke. Go, some of you, knock at the abbey-gate,

And bid the Lady Abbess come to me:

I will determine this before I stir. [Exit one to the Priory.]

Enter Messenger.

Mes. O mistress, mistress, fly and save yourself!

My master and his man are both broke loose,

Beaten us every one, and bound the doctor;

He calls for you, and vows revenge upon you.

Adr. Peace, fool, thy master and his man are here.

Mes. No, mistress, no, my bones can tell he's there.

[A cry heard.]

Hark, hark, I hear him! Mistress, fly, begone!

[Exit Messenger.]

En-

THE T W I N S ; OR,

Enter Antipholis and Dromio of Ephesus.

Adr. Amazement all! it is indeed my husband!—

Ant. of E. Justice, most gracious Duke, oh grant me justice!

Ægeon. Unless the fear of death doth make me doat, I see my son Antipholis and Dromio! [*Aside.*

Ant. of E. Justice, great Sir, against that woman there, That hath abused and dishonour'd me, Even in the strength and height of injury.

Duke. Discover how, and thou shalt find me just.

Ant. of E. This day, great Sir, she shut the doors upon me,

Whilst she with harlots feasted in my house.

Duke. A grievous fault. Say, woman, didst thou so?

Adr. No, good my lord—myself, he, and my sister, Did dine together, so befall my soul!

Luc. Ne'er may I look on day, nor sleep on night, But she tells to your highness simple truth.

Ang. O perjur'd woman! They are both forsworn. In this the madman justly chargeth them.

Ant. of E. My liege, I am advised what I say. This woman lock'd me out this day from dinner: That goldsmith there was with me at the time, And parted with me to go fetch a ring, Promising to bring it to the Porcupine, Where Balthazar and I did dine together.

Ang. My lord, in truth thus far I witness him, That he din'd not at home, but was lock'd out.

Duke. But had he such a ring of thee, or no?

Ang. He had, my lord—and when he ran in *here*— These people saw the ring upon his finger.

Ant. of E. I never came within these abbey-walls, Nor ever saw the ring—so help me heav'n!

Duke. Why, what an intricate impeach is this? If here you hous'd him, here he would have been. You say he din'd at home;—the goldsmith there Denies that saying—Sirrah, what say you?

Dro. of E. Sir, he din'd with her, there, at the Porcupine.

Hof. He did.

Duke. Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here?

Hof. As sure, my liege, as I do see your grace.

Why

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Duke. Why this is strange—Go call the Abbess hither.
I think you are all mated, or stark mad.

[Exit one to the Abbess.]

Eg. Most mighty Duke, vouchsafe me speak a word.
Haply I see a friend will save my life,
And pay the sum that may deliver me.

Duke. Speak freely, Syracusan, what thou wilt.

Eg. Is not your name, Sir, called *Antipholis*,
And is not that your bondman Dromio?

Dro. of E. Within this hour I was his *bondman*, Sir;
But he, I thank him, gnaw'd in two my cords.—
Now I am Dromio, and his man *unbound*.

Eg. Why look you strange on me? you know me well.

Ant. of E. I never saw you in my life till now.

Eg. Oh, grief hath chang'd me since thou saw'st me
last?

But tell me, yet, dost thou not know my voice?

Ant. of E. Neither.

Eg. Dromio, nor thou?

Dro. of E. No, trust me, Sir, not I!—

Eg. I am sure thou dost.

Dro. of E. Ay, Sir? but I am sure I do not; and
whatsoever a man denies, you are now bound to believe
him.

Eg. Not know my voice!—Oh time's extremity!
Hast thou so crack'd and splitted my poor tongue
In seven short years, that here my only son
Knows not my feeble key of untun'd cares?—
But seven years since, in Syracusa's bay,
Thou know'st, we parted —

Ant. of E. I never saw my father in my life—

But yet the Duke, and all that know me here,
Can witness with me that this is not so,—
For never yet beheld I Syracusa.

Enter Abbess with Antipholis and Dromio of Syracusa.

Abb. Most mighty Duke, behold a man much wrong'd.

Adr. I see two husbands, or my eyes deceive me!

Duke. One of these men is genius to the other!
Which is the natural man, and which the spirit?

Dro. of S. I, Sir, am Dromio; command him away.

Dro. of E. I, Sir, am Dromio—pray let me stay.

Ant. of S. *Egeon*, art thou not, or else his ghost?—
My

My father!

[Falls at Ægeon's feet.

Dro. of S. O my old master! who hath bound him here?

Abb. Whoever bound him, I will loose his bonds.

Speak, old Ægeon, if thou beest the man

That had a wife once call'd *Æmilia*,

That bore thee at a burden two fair sons:

Oh, if thou beest the same Ægeon, speak——

And speak unto the same *Æmilia*!——

Æg. If I dream not, thou art *Æmilia*!——

If thou art she, tell me where is that son

That floated with thee on the fatal raft?

Æmilia. By men of Epidamnum he and I,

And the twin Dromio, all were taken up;

But by-and-by rude fishermen of Corinth

By force took Dromio and my son from them,

And me they left with those of Epidamnum;

What then became of them I cannot tell——

Though sure I'm blest in both my boys again!

[Embraces her sons.

Adr. Which of you two did dine with me to-day?

Ant. of S. I, gentle mistress——

Dro. of S. And I secur'd the gate.

Adr. You are my husband, then?

Ant. of E. No, I say nay to that.

Dro. of E. Nor must *that* Dromio be your porter now.——

Ant. of S. Fair sister, it seems these ducats I receiv'd from you;

[To Adriana.

This ring from you, for which I'll satisfy you:

[To Angelo.

I see we still did meet each other's man,

And I was ta'en for him, and he for me.——

Ant. of E. These ducats pawn I for my father here.

Duke. It shall not need, thy father hath his life.

Dro. of S. Master, shall I fetch your stuff from ship-board?

Ant. of E. Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embark'd?

Ant. of S. He speaks to me,—I am your master, Dromio:

We'll look to that anon—Embrace thy brother;

Ge,

WHICH, IS WHICH?

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Go, get you in there, and rejoice with him.—

[The Antipholises and the rest of the Company retire up the stage.]

Dro. of E. Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother.

See, by you, I am a sweet-fac'd youth :—

Will you walk in ?

Dro. of S. Not I, Sir, you are my elder.

Dro. of E. That's a question :

How shall I try it ?

Dro. of S. We'll draw cuts for the senior :

'Till then, lead thou first.—

Dro. of E. Nay, then, thus— *[Embracing.]*

He came into the world, like brother and brother ;

Now let's go hand in hand—

Both.—Not one before another. *[Exeunt.]*

Emilia. Renowned Duke, vouchsafe to take the pains

To go with us into the abbey here,

And hear at large discoursed all our fortunes.

His story may be worth a serious hearing :

Which will shew the virtuous never shou'd despair.

*The troubles sent by Heav'n ne'er come amiss,
They're but design'd t' improve our sense of bliss.*

T H E

T H E D E S E R T E R.

I N T W O A C T S.

B Y C. D I B D I N.

D R A M A T I S P E R S O N Æ.

M E N.

<i>Harry,</i> <i>Russel,</i> <i>Simkin,</i> <i>Skirmish,</i> <i>Plint,</i> <i>First Soldier,</i> <i>Second Soldier,</i> <i>Third Soldier,</i> <i>Fourth Soldier,</i>	<i>Drury-Lass.</i> Mr Vernon. Mr Bannister. Mr Dibdin. Mr Parsons. Mr Wright. Mr Carpenter. Mr Fawcett. Mr Kear. Mr Blanchard.	<i>Edinburgh, 1782.</i> Mr Gaudry. Mr Charteris. Mr Hollingworth. Mr Knight. Mr Taylor. Mr Hallion. Mr Simpson. Mr Banks.
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W O M E N.

<i>Louisa,</i> <i>Jenny,</i> <i>Margaret,</i>	Mrs Smith. Mrs Wroughten. Mrs Love.	Miss Kirby. Mrs Henderson. Mrs Charteris.
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A C T I.

SCENE, *A Cottage, with a view of the French Camp at a distance.*

MARGARET knitting, and JENNY spinning, at the door of the cottage: SIMKIN and other Villagers come on with baskets of fruit.

A I R I.

SIMKIN.

I CAN'T for my life guess the cause of this fuss.
 Why, there's pipers and fiddlers; while Robin and Harry,
 And Clodpole and Roger, and ten more of us,
 Have pull'd as much fruit as we are able to carry.

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MARGARET.

Why, numskull, that's nothing: her ladyship's wine,
All over the village, runs just like a fountain;
And I heard the folks say, every dish, when they dine,
Will be swimming in claret, madeira, and mountain.

JENNY.

Then for poultry, and such like—good Lord, what a store!
I saw Goodman Gander fix baskets full cramming;
Then such comfits and jellies! why one such feast more
Would certainly breed in the village a famine.

CHORUS.

What the meaning can be
We shall presently see,
For yonder's old Ruffet, who certainly knows;
Be what it will,
Our wish shall be still,

Joy and health to the Duchess, wherever she goes!

Sim. What can all this feasting be for?

Jen. I'll give you while I wind up this bottom and
another, and you sha'nt find it out.

Sim. Why then if you know so well, why don't you
tell us what it is?

Jen. Ah, I thought you would none of you guess it:
this grand feasting at the Duchess's is because the king's
coming to the camp.

Marg. Who told you so?

Jen. I had it from Gaffer Ruffet himself.

Sim. Does the King come to the camp to day?

Marg. Why, yes; I knew that.

Sim. Then as sure as can be, I know what will
happen.

Jen. Why, what will happen?

Sim. There will be two weddings in the village before
to-morrow night.

Marg. How so?

Sim. Why, is not Henry, the young soldier, to marry
Louisa, Gaffer Ruffet's daughter, as soon as the re-
view's over?

Jen. Not if I can prevent it.

Marg. Well, that's but one wedding!

Sim. Yes, but Jenny can tell you whose wedding
t'other's to be.

Jen.

Jen. How should I know?

Sim. Ah, you wont say any thing before folks, because you're asham'd!

Jen. What do you mean?

Sim. As if you did not know——

Jen. Not I indeed.

Sim. Why did not you promise me, that when Hen married Louisa, you'd marry me?

Jen. Yes, yes, and I'll keep my word; whenever Henry marries Louisa, I'll marry you.

Enter Ruflet and Louisa.

A I R II.

Lou. Why must I appear so deceitful?

I cannot, dear father, comply:

Ah! could I think him so ungrateful,

With anguish I surely should die.

What so tender, at parting, he told me,

Which such joy to my bosom convey'd;

When next he was doom'd to behold me,

Could I think would be this way repaid?

Ruf. Well, well: But, child—

Lou. Indeed, father, 'tis impossible; I never can consent to such a thing.

Ruf. Odds heart, Louisa, there's no harm in it. Neighbours, come round here, I'll tell you the whole affair you know what a dear good lady the Duchess is.

Marg. Ah, she's a dear good lady, indeed, and we of us ought to do every thing she orders us.

Ruf. I and my family in particular ought, for many the good thing she has given me and my old dam then how kind she was to all my poor children! I stood godmother to this, and had her christened after her own name.

Sim. Louisa.

Ruf. Well, now we come to the point: Henry, you know, who was bred up with my girl, and intended for his infancy for her husband, is a soldier.

Sim. So he is.

Ruf. And because she has a value for every thing that belongs to me, this good lady, about three weeks ago

sent to the colonel for his discharge, that the young folks may live at home at their ease, and be as happy as the day is long.

Marg. That will be charming and comfortable for you, neighbour.

Ruf. Yes : but now comes the mischief of it ; what has occasion'd it, I don't know ; I never saw any harm of the lad, but there are always busy tongues in this village, doing people ill offices ; and such reports, within these few days, have reached the Duchess's ears, that she is determined to see farther into this business, before she gives Louisa the portion she promised her.

Jen. You may thank me for that. [*Aside.*

Lou. But he'll be here to-day ; and so well I know his heart, that I'm sure he'll clear himself to their confusion who could so vilely traduce him.

Jen. Perhaps not. [*Aside.*

Ruf. Well, child, I am sure you can't wish it more than I do ; nothing has ever pleased me so much as the thought of your coming together : I wish to see you married with all my heart ; for then I shall have nothing to do but to listen to the prattle of your children, and prepare myself to follow poor Dorothy.

A I R III.

My life's three parts diminish'd,
And when the sum is finish'd,
The parish-bell may toll,
Gra' mercy on my soul !

Ding dong !
Swing swong !

Methinks my old companions say,
That though his hairs are now grown grey,
Old Ruffet once upon a day,
When all was mirth and jollity,
When sports went round, and bells did ring,
Could briskly dance, and blythe could sing ;
And then upon the green to see
His rustic feats—'twas who but he ?
I'd give this bauble, life, away,
Without a sigh, could I but stay
To see a little infant care,
Like Henry brave, Louisa fair ;

Could I see this, I'd yield, content,
A life, I hope, not badly spent.

But as I was telling you, the Duchess hearing of these reports, is determin'd that we shall make a trial of his affections.

Lou. Indeed, father, there's no necessity for it; he loves me most sincerely.

Ruf. Nay, nay, child, I really think your love carries you too much away in this affair; it can do no harm; 'tis only an innocent frolic: you are to make believe as if you were a bride; and let me see who—oh, you shall be the bridegroom.

Sim. Shall I? I'cod I'm glad of that.

Ruf. But above all, I must instruct you, Jenny, in your part; you are to sit here, and tell Henry, when he comes, that Louisa and Simkin were married yesterday.

Jen. The very thing I wish'd. [*Aside.*

Lou. I am vex'd to death that this trick should be play'd him; I can judge by myself what he'll feel; if I was told such a thing of him, how miserable I should be!

Ruf. But he'll be so much the happier when he finds out the deceit, child.

A I R IV.

LOUISA.

Though prudence may press me,
And duty distress me,
Against inclination, O, what can they do!
No longer a rover,
His follies are over;
My heart, my fond heart, says my Henry is true.
The bee, thus, as changing,
From sweet to sweet ranging,
A rose should he light on, ne'er wishes to stray;
With raptures possessing
In one every blessing,
'Till torn from her bosom, he flies far away.

Ruf. Well, well, don't make yourself uneasy; I dare say he loves you as sincerely as you think he does; if so, he'll soon be undeceived, and we shall finish the day as happily

happily as we could wish: in the mean time, let us think of what we have to do; we are to pretend we came from the church; the fiddles and bagpipes are to go first, then the lads and lasses follow; after which, mind this now, we are to go to the Duchess's mansion in grand procession, and there to be feasted like so many princes and princesses.

Sim. I'cod that will suit me nicely.—But, Gaffer Ruffet, Jenny says you told her the feasting was to be for the king.

Ruf. For us and the king; yes, yes, the king, after he and his courtiers have had an entertainment at the Duchess's, goes to review the camp, where the soldiers are all to appear under arms—Ah, girls! that's what none of you know any thing about; when the king goes to the camp, then's the time—the drums beat—the fife play—the colours are flying—and—and——Lord——Lord! what a charming thing war is!

Sim. It must be then when one comes home again, and it's all over.

Ruf. There's no life like the life of a soldier; and then for love! let the girls take care of their hearts; I remember I won my Dorothy just after I came from such a review now as there may be to-day.

Marg. Ah, indeed, the soldiers make sad work with young womens hearts, sure enough.

Ruf. And how can it be otherwise?

A I R V.

One conduct's for
Both love and war,
The point's to gain possession;
For this we watch
The enemy's coast,
Till we sleeping catch
Them on their post:
Then good b'ye, form;
The fort we storm,
Make towns or hearts
Surrender at discretion.
In love the only battery,
Which with success we play

To conquer hearts, is flattery;
 No fortress can its power withstand;
 Neither cannons, mortars, sword in hand,
 Can make such way.
 As 'tis in love, so 'tis in war,
 We make believe,
 Mislead, deceive;
 Pray, what serve drums and trumpets for,
 Cannons, and all our force of arms,
 But with their thund'ring alarms,
 To tell, not cover our designs?
 Can these to trenches, breaches, mines,
 Blockades, or ambuscades compare?
 No, all agree
 That policy
 Is the true art militaire.

But, come, come, we must go and prepare ourselves;
 you have not much time to spare, and see where he
 comes hurrying along there; there, now he clammers up
 yonder hill—well done, faith! Ah, your lovers have
 no gout to stop them. Come, child,—neighbours, come
 along.

Lou. Cruel father!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Henry.

*Afterwards, in the wedding procession, Ruffet, Simkin,
 Louisa, Margaret, Jenny, and villagers.*

A I R VI.

HENRY.

The nymph who in my bosom reigns,
 With such full force my heart enchains,
 That nothing ever can impair
 The empire she possesses there.
 Who digs for stones of radiant ray,
 Finds baser matter in his way:
 The worthless load he may contemn,
 But prizes still and seeks the gem.

But I hear music! What can this be? All the villa-
 gers are coming this way—it seems like a wedding—I'll
 retire—How I envy this couple!

Ruf. Charming! He has hid himself—pretend not to
 see

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see him—don't turn your head that way—he's looking at you now!

Lou. How cruel, not to let me have one look!

Sim. No, you must look at nobody but me now: I am the bridegroom, you know.

Ruf. Jenny, be sure you play your part well.

Jen. Never fear me—My part's a much more difficult one than they imagine. [*Aside.*

Jenny, who sits down to spinning, and Henry, who comes forward during her song.

A I R VII.

JENNY.

Somehow my spindle I mislaid,

And lost it underneath the grass:

Damon advancing, bow'd his head,

And said, What seek you, pretty lass?

A little love, but urg'd with care,

Of leads a heart, and leads it far.

'Twas passing by yon spreading oak,

That I my spindle lost just now:

His knife then kindly Damon took,

And from the tree he cut a bough.

A little love, &c. &c,

Thus did the youth his time employ,

While me he tenderly beheld:

He talk'd of love; I leap'd for joy;

For, ah! my heart did fondly yield.

A little love, &c. &c.

Hen. Good day, young woman.

Jen. (*sings.*) 'Twas passing nigh, &c.

Hen. Young woman!

Jen. (*sings.*) 'Twas passing nigh, &c.

Hen. Pray tell me, what wedding that is?

Jen. What! that wedding?

Hen. Yes.

Jen. Do you want to know whose wedding it is?

Hen. Ay, ay.

Jen. What, that wedding that went past?

Hen. Yes, yes.

Jen. Why, 'tis a wedding in the village here.

Hen. But whose, I ask you?

C 3

Jen.

Jen. (sings.)

Hen. Are you making a jest me? answer me, I beg of you.

Jen. Why, I do answer you; don't I? (*Sings.*)

Hen. What, again! Whose is this wedding? Whose is it? Speak, or I'll—did not I see amongst them?—distraction!—will you answer, you?

Jen. Lord, you are so impatient! why then the wedding is Louisa's, old Ruffet's daughter, the invalid soldier.

Hen. Louisa's wedding!

Jen. Yes, she was married yesterday.

Hen. Married! good heavens! Are you sure of what you say? Do you know Ruffet?

Jen. Do I know him? to be sure, I do; why he is bailiff to the Duchess. What makes you so uneasy? you seem as if you had an interest in it.

Hen. An interest in it! Oh!

Jen. Dear me, if I remember right, you are the young man that every body thought she'd be married to. O la! what wickedness there is in the world! I am sure I very sincerely pity you.

Hen. I am obliged to you for your concern.

Jen. Nay, it is not more on your account than my own, that I am uneasy.

Hen. How so?

Jen. Why, she was not content with making you miserable, but she must make me so too: the vile wretch she's married to has perjur'd himself; for he has sworn a thousand and a thousand times to marry me.

Hen. What falsehood and treachery!

Jen. If I was you, I would not bear it quietly; not but she'd brazen it all out, for I tax'd her with it myself; and she only laugh'd in my face, and told me that you and I might go mourn together, like two turtles, the loss of our mates.

Hen. Insulting creature!

Jen. Yes, and for my part I said to myself, says I, 'Twould be a good joke to take her at her word: but then again I thought, that though revenge is sweet, yet people have their likings and their dislikings; and as for
me,

me, to be sure, I can't pretend to such a good young man as you.

Hen. (not regarding her.) Infamous wretch! well might she keep her eyes fix'd upon the ground; but I'll see her, upbraid her with her infidelity, and leave her to the guilty reproaches of her own ungrateful heart.

Jen. Young man——

Hen. (returning) Well, what do you say?

Jen. I believe you did not rightly hear what I said.

Hen. Oh, I have no time for trifling.

Jen. Poor soul, how he takes it to heart! But I must follow him; for if I lose this opportunity, I may not find it easy to get another. But stay, upon second thoughts, if I can make but a tool of Simkin, and by that means alarm Louisa, I shall every way gain my ends; for if she once believes him capable of slighting her, I am sure she has too much spirit ever to see him again.

Enter Simkin.

Sim. Oh, Jenny, I am glad I have found you; what do you think brought me away from Louisa and them?

Jen. I neither know nor care.

Sim. Why, I was afraid you'd be jealous.

Jen. I jealous!

Sim. Why yes, you know, because I pretended to be Louisa's husband.

Jen. No, I'd have you to know I am not jealous; I am only vex'd to think I have been such a fool to listen to you so long, you base creature you.

Sim. If I did not think there was something the matter, by your looking so cross.

Jen. And enough to make one; you know I can't help loving you, and this is the way you return my affection.

Sim. Why, you know 'twas only in play.

Jen. In play! I could see plain enough, how your eyes sparkled upon the bare mention of being the bridegroom.

Sim. Now, Jenny, if you would, but hear me speak——

Jen. Speak! get out of my sight, you perjur'd wretch!

wretch ! I was fool enough not to credit what I heard of you ; but I dare say 'tis all true.

Sim. Why, what did you hear of me ?

Jen. That it was you who invented all the reports about Henry.

Sim. Me ! as I am a living Christian, Jenny——

Jen. Don't say a word to me ; you have made me miserable, and now you want to insult me.

Sim. Indeed I don't ; you can't think now how happy I could make you, if you would only hear me three words——

Jen. Don't talk to me of happiness, for I never shall be happy as long as I live.

Sim. How dearly she loves me ! what a pity it is she won't let me clear up this affair. [To himself.]

Jen. And then that demure little minx ; oh, I could tear her eyes out ! I was always afraid of it, and now I am convinc'd, that her pretended love for Henry was nothing but a contrivance to blind me the easier.

Sim. Dear, dear——

Jen. But, however, you have both mis'd your aim : for Henry behaves as he ought to do, and holds her arts in contempt ; nay, he told me himself he had fix'd his affections on a more worthy object.

Sim. He did !

Jen. Yes, he did, and you may go and tell her so ; and as for me,

A I R VIII.

Mr Simkin, I'd have you to know,

That for all your fine airs,

I'm not at my last pray'rs,

Not put to it so,

That of course I must take up with you ;

For I really, Sir, think, that tho' husbands are few

I need not go far off to seek,

For a better than you any day of the week.

To be sure, I must own, I was foolish enough

To believe all the tenderness, nonsense, and stuff,

Which for ever you dinn'd in my ears ;

And when for a while you've been out of my sight,

The day has been comfortless, dreary at night,

And my only companions my tears :

But

But now that's all o'er;
I hate you, despise you, will see you no more.

Exit Jenny

Sim. Why, what the deuce has got hold of her? for my share, I believe all the folks in our village are gone mad—mad! I'cod, I'll be hang'd if any bedlamites are half so mad as folks in love.

‘ A I R IX.

‘ The whims of folks in love to know,
‘ I believe would fairly pose Old Nick;
‘ This moment fast—next moment slow;
‘ Now consenting,
‘ Now repenting,
‘ Nor at this or that will stick;
‘ But changing still,
‘ They wont—they will——
‘ When they mean Yes, they'll answer No;
‘ And fume and fret,
‘ This hour get
‘ What they dislike an hour ago.
‘ If you expect to find them here,
‘ To t'other side they quickly veer;
‘ The wind and tide,
‘ In the same mood will longer bide,
‘ Like two fond turtles side by side:
‘ This hour they woo,
‘ And bill and coo!
‘ Then, by-and-by,
‘ No reason why,
‘ They make the devil and all to do. *[Exit,*

SCENE changes.

Enter a party of Soldiers, afterwards Henry.

1 *Sold.* I'll tell you, my boys, how the matter stands;
if we can but catch hold of him, the *summum bonum* of
the thing is this, he'll be first tried and then shot.

2 *Sold.* Yes, but suppose we don't catch hold of him?

3 *Sold.* Why then he'll neither be tried nor shot.

4 *Sold.* No more he won't.

2 *Sold.* But I have been thinking how we shall do to
know him.

1 *Sold.* Ay, you are a fool in these matters; I'll tell
you how you'll know him; here! here! I've got his
name

A C T II.

SCENE, *A prison, a table, and some old chairs*; FLINT, *who while he speaks puts the stage in order*; HENRY *walks about disturbed*; and afterwards SKIRMISH, *who comes on as FLINT goes off the stage.*

FLINT.

THERE's some water for you to drink; a table and a chair, and yonder's your bed; but if you go on at the rate you have begun, there will be no great trouble in making it.—I *am* a deserter, I *have* deserted; I believe you'll find you had better not have confess'd quite so soon:—why, what a devil of a fellow you must be! But, come, as I said before, there's some water for you; and if you choose to have any thing better—money, d'ye see—you understand me right—for money—and, faith, if you have any, you have no great reason to be sparing of it; for I believe your business will soon be settled—Do you choose any wine?

Hen. No, no.

Flint. Well, very well; if you won't have wine, you must drink water.

Hen. False, false Louisa!—Oh heaven!

Flint. But you seem a little down in the mouth about this business; never mind it, 'twill soon be over; you are to suffer at five: in the mean time I'll send a lodger of mine to you; he'll put you in spirits, by that you have drank a glass together; his name is *Skirmish*; he's a devilish hearty fellow. [Goes off.]

Hen. That a few hours should sink me from the expectation of so much happiness to this abyss of misery! Perfidious woman!

Skir. Here, my boy; who wants me? who calls for Skirmish? Comrade, did you want me?

Hen. Me! no.

Skir. Why, yes, you did. Ho, ho, house! here, house! we'll have a glass together; as we never saw one another before, we'll now begin to renew our acquaintance.

Hen. Can you tell me if I could get a sheet of writing paper?

Skir. Yes, surely, you shall have that: here, house! house,

house, I say! where the devil are you all? But hark'ee, friend! what a confounded mistake you have made here! —a mistake! damme, you have made two mistakes! I can prove it: in the first place, to desert at all, was a mistake; then to confess it, oh, damn it, that was a mistake indeed! I am but a silly ignorant fellow; but had I been in your place, had he been my sergeant, my general, nay, my corporal, I would have said, No, I am no deserter: No, no, my lad, Skirmish scorns to desert.

A I R XI.

Though to have a bout at drinking,
When I hear the glasses chinking,
There's nothing but I'd do or say.
Yet Skirmish ne'er shall run away.

For here is his motto, and so there's an end:
He's none of your flatterers, who fawn and are civil;
But for country, his bottle, his king, and his friend,
Little Skirmish would go half-way to the devil.

Soldiers often fickle prove,
Who can know his mind for ever?
We forgive you false in love,
But deserters, never, never,

Enter Flint with wine.

Flint. There's a young woman without, asking for a soldier. [*To Skirmish.*] I suppose it must be you she wants.

Skir. Yes, yes, 'tis me, I warrant you: let her come in. [*Exit Flint.*] But give me the wine [*sets the bottle down on seeing her.*] [*Enter Louisa.*] Ah, ah, a smart wench, faith!

Hen. Good heavens! what do I see? You here!

Low. Mc. Henry!

Hen. Is it possible!

Skir. Oh ho, I smoke this business; comrade, I'm off, I'm off; she's your sister, I suppose, or your cousin; but that's no business of mine. Madam, no offence, I hope; my name is Skirmish, I understand what good breeding is; I'm off, brother soldier; faith, she's a fine girl! I'll go and walk a little in the court-yard! d'ye mind me, I'm off—*inim!*

Vols IV.

D

Hen.

Hen. This insult, Louisa, is beyond enduring! Is it not enough?—But I will not upbraid you.

Lou. Hear me but a moment!

Hen. Away! don't I know you false?—barbarous, faithless wretch.

Skir. [*coming on.*] Don't mind me; don't let me disturb you; I only come to fetch the wine, for I believe you don't care to drink; will you take a sup? No—well, your servant—I'm off again.

Hen. It is not from your hands, but from your father's, that I shall expect—

Lou. 'Tis true, my father—

Hen. That infamous old man! but go—I have no more to say. Oh, Louisa! I doat upon you still! is it possible you can have entirely forgot me?

Lou. Believe me, Henry!

Hen. But with what assurance—what composure!

Lou. I should not be compos'd, if I was really to blame.

Hen. O thou perfidious woman

Lou. Enjoy your error.

Hen. My error!

Lou. With one word I could convince you.

Hen. With one word! speak it then, if you dare.

Lou. I am not married then.

Hen. Not married!

Lou. 'Twas entirely my father's doings; his scheme too—

Hen. O cruel! 'Tis to no purpose whether 'twas you or him.

Lou. The Duchess—

Hen. Don't name her; you dare not show yourself to her.

Lou. 'Twas her who order'd the whole affair.

Hen. How!

Lou. What I tell you is true; some reports to your disadvantage having reached the Duchess, which I then knew, and we have since found, to be false, she ordered this mock-wedding, for such only it was, to prove your affections; so that every thing you saw and heard was contrived on purpose to deceive you, and the whole affair was but a joke.

Hen.

Hen. [*sitting down in the chair, rests his hand on the table.*] Was but a joke!

‘ A I R XII.

LOUISA.

‘ Ah! cease this affliction, your troubles are past;
 ‘ Of care and disquiet, that sigh was your last :
 ‘ How could you once harbour a doubt of my love?
 ‘ The girl you convers’d with, the feast, and the rest,
 ‘ The music and dancing, was all but a jest;
 ‘ A frolic, design’d your affections to prove.
 ‘ Believe me, Louisa reluctant comply’d,
 ‘ Her father commanded—intreaty was vain;
 ‘ Or I swear by this hand, I would rather have dy’d,
 ‘ Than have given my Henry a moment of pain.
 ‘ *Hen.* O heavens! my heart will burst.’

Lou. What means this grief, my love? do you still doubt the truth of what I say?

Hen. No, Louisa; ’tis because I believe you.

Lou. Here’s my father. Oh, Sir! I am glad you are come. Ask him what’s the matter; make him tell the cause of his distress.

Enter Russet.

Ruf. Henry, my dear boy, good day to you; I am overjoy’d to see you; well, all matters are clear’d up, and you may take Louisa for your pains; whenever you will, I give her to you.

Hen. I beseech you, desire your daughter to step into the court-yard for a minute or two.

Ruf. Why so?

Hen. Oblige me only; desire she will.

Ruf. Louisa, we have something to say to each other; step out for a minute or two, I’ll call you back presently.

Hen. [*taking her hand as she goes out.*] Louisa, ’tis an age since I saw you last.

Lou. And yet you send me away from you already.

Hen. You shall come back again immediately.

Ruf. I was surpris’d to hear you was put in prison, though they tell me ’tis but for a trifle. I am overjoyed to see you; the Duchess will soon get you releas’d, and then—but you seem thoughtful.

Hen. Will you promise me to do whatever I request?

Ruf. That I will, provided it is in my power.

Hen. I beg of you to take your daughter away with you; we must take leave of one another.

Ruf. Why, I know that, don't I? you must go back to your regiment.

Hen. Well, return hither two days hence, and ask for a dragoon named *Skirmish*, he will deliver you a letter—and for me—

Ruf. O I know well enough what you mean; you'll be at the camp; the king's to be there.

Hen. Have you command enough of yourself not to betray any thing to your daughter of what I am going to tell you?

Ruf. To be sure, I have.

Hen. I am afraid she'll return before—

Ruf. [*looking out.*] No, no, we are very safe.

Hen. This wedding-trick—

Ruf. Yes, 'twas I manag'd it.

Hen. It threw me into despair—

Ruf. Good, very good! I knew it would.

Hen. And in my fury—

Ruf. Ha, ha, ha! what, was you furious then? delightful!

Lou. [*running in.*] O cruel father! O unfortunate accident! this wedding has undone us all; he has confess'd himself a deserter, and is condemn'd to suffer death.

Ruf. What's this I hear?

Hen. She knows it all—O torture!

Ruf. A deserter! condemn'd! Henry, can this be as she says?

Hen. 'Tis but too true.

Ruf. Good heavens!

Enter Flint.

Flint. You are wanted without.

Hen. Me!

Flint. You—you must go directly.

Hen. Adieu, Louisa!

A I R XIII.

HENRY.

Adieu! adieu! my heart will break,
This torment's beyond bearing.

Lou.

LOUISA.

Adieu! ah why, my love? oh speak,

And banish this despairing.

Give thy Louisa's pangs relief.

HENRY.

I cannot speak, oh love! oh grief!

HENRY, LOUISA, and RUSSET.

Ye pitying powers! some comfort send:

When will our sorrows have an end?

Lou. For heav'n's sake, Sir, where is he gone? who wants him?

Flint. Only some friends.

Lou. Surely, it can't be to—

Flint. Oh, no! it is not for that yet—'tis too soon yet a while; about five or six—perhaps it may be seven first.

Lou. Oh, support me, Sir!

Ruf. No, child, we may yet prevent it. I'll go to the Duchess and tell her the whole affair.

Lou. She has brought me into this trouble.

Ruf. I'll seek her this instant, do you follow me.

[Goes off.]

Lou. Oh, Sir! on my knees I beseech you.

Flint. There's no occasion for kneeling to me; what would you have?

Lou. Is not the king to be at the camp to-day?

Flint. Yes, and what then?

Lou. Tell me, Sir; in such a case, 'tis an act of justice; the king surely will do justice.

Flint. Certainly; he never does otherwise.

Lou. Alas, Sir! I am poor, so very poor—

Flint. That wont hinder it a bit; the king's too good to despise folks because they are poor.

Lou. But 'tis for you I mean.

Flint. For me?

Lou. To thank you with; to intreat you; here is a small ornament, of no great value indeed; I give you this, Sir, I wish I had more to give; 'tis silver; delay it but till to-morrow.

Flint. Do what, delay it!—*[Looking at the trinket]* hey! it seems to me to be hollow; are you sure 'tis silver?

Lou. This suspense is dreadful. [*Goes off*]

Flint. Why, I'll tell you; I can't absolutely delay his execution, but I'll let him have as much wine as ever he can drink.—What, gone!—Gad, this girl has a generous spirit.

Enter Skirmish, who holds a bottle and glass in one hand, a sheet of paper under his arm, and with the other drag in Simkin.

Skir. Come along, what the devil are you afraid of? Here's a young man who wants to see this soldier, and the girl that was here: where are they? [*To Flint*]

Flint. She's gone away.

Skir. But where's he?

Flint. He was sent for out to some friends; he'll be here again. [*Exit*]

Sim. If you please, Sir, I'll follow the gentleman.

Skir. You and I must take a glass together.—So this soldier is your cousin, is he?

Sim. Yes, Sir.

Skir. Sit yourself down then—And he was sent here yesterday?

Sim. Yes, Sir.

Skir. Well then, sit down, I tell you.

Sim. But, Sir.

Skir. Sit down, I say: sit down there;—hell and fury, will you sit down when I bid you? there!—now we'll take a glass together; he'll soon be here; come fill.

Sim. Sir, I thank you, but I am not dry; besides, don't care much for drinking, without knowing my company.

Skir. Without knowing your company! why, you little starv'd, sniveling—aren't you in company with gentleman? But drink this minute, or I'll—

Sim. I will, Sir, if you won't be angry.

Skir. Not I; I won't be angry. So you say that—

Sim. I, Sir? I did not say any thing.

Skir. Well, then, if you did not say any thing, sing—sing me a song.

Sim. I am not in spirits for singing.

Skir. Spirits! why, a song will raise your spirits come, sing away.

Sir

Sim. But, Sir, I can't sing.

Skir. Ever while you live, sing.

Sim. Indeed, Sir, I can't.—

Skir. You can't?—why, then I will.

Sim. Well, but Sir.

Skir. Sit still, I tell you.

Sim. But—I wish you, cousin—

Skir. He can't be long now; hear my song.

A I R XIV.

Women and wine compare so well,

They run in a perfect parallel;

For women bewitch us when they will;

And so does wine:

They make the statesman lose his skill,

The soldier, lawyer, and divine;

They put strange whims in the gravest skull,

And send their wits to gather wool:

Then since the world thus runs away,

And women and wine

Are alike divine;

Let's love all night, and drink all day!

There's something like a song for you! now we'll sing together.

Sim. Together?

Skir. Ay, both together.

Sim. But, Sir, I don't know your song.

Skir. Why, who the devil wants you to sing my song?

Sim. I never saw such a man in my life: how shall I get away from him? Sir!

Skir. Well, what d'ye say?

Sim. I believe there's somebody looking for you yonder.

Skir. Is there?

[*While Skirmish looks round, Simkin takes an opportunity of running off.*]

Skir. O, you young dog! I'll be after you; but stay, here comes the poor unfortunate young man his cousin.

Enter Henry.

Skir. How are your spirits? take a sup of this: oh! here's your writing-paper.

Hen.

Hen. Thank you, friend; oh, my heart! I wish I could have seen Louisa once more. [*Sits down to write.*]

Skir. Ah, you're a happy man, you can write! [*Loud.*] Oh, my cursed stars, what a wretched fellow I am!

Hen. Why, what's the matter? [*Looking round.*]

Skir. The matter?—Confusion!—I blush to say it; but since it must out, what will you say to such a poor, miserable—and, but for this one misfortune, fit to be a general: if I had known how to write, I might have had a regiment five years ago: but company is the ruin of us all; drinking with one, and drinking with another: Why, now here; I was in hopes *here* I should be able to study a little; but the devil a bit; no such thing as getting the bottle out of one's hand: ah, if I could hold the pen as I have held the bottle, what a charming hand I should have wrote by this time!

Hen. Skirmish, do me one favour.

Skir. What is it?

Hen. May I depend upon you?

Skir. To the last drop of my blood.

Hen. Promise me to deliver this letter.

Skir. I'll go directly.

Hen. You can't go with it now; you are a prisoner, you know.

Skir. Damn it, so I am; I forgot that: well, but to-morrow I shall have my liberty; and then—

Hen. A person, whose name is *Russet*, will be here to inquire after me; deliver it to him.

Skir. May I perish if I fail!

Hen. Let me speak to you.

[*They talk apart*]

Enter Margaret, Jenny, and Simkin.

Marg. Yes, yes, you vile hussy, 'twas all your fault.

Jen. Well, have I not confes'd it?

Marg. Confes'd it indeed! is not the poor young man going to lose his life, and all upon your account?

Jen. I own it, I own it; I never shall joy myself again as long as I live; I shall see his ghost every night.

Sim. And it serves you right; and I'll tell you more news for your comfort; I would not marry you, now you have been so wicked, if you was worth your weight in gold.

Marg

Marg. Ah, you need not talk ; for you know well enough you was told to run after him to call him back, and you never once offer'd to move.

Sim. Why, how could I? I was the bridegroom, you know.

Jen. See ! there he is !

Marg. Bless us, how alter'd he looks !

Hen. Good day, aunt ; good day, [*to the others.*] Give us leave, brother soldier.

Skir. Yes, yes, I'll go ! I wont disturb you ; I'll go and see what they are doing ; I'm afraid no good, for the time draws near.

Marg. Ah, my poor boy ! can you forgive us ? 'twas all our doing.

Jen. No, 'twas my doing.

Hen. Let us say no more about it ; 'twas an unfortunate affair : where's Louisa and her father ?

Marg. Ah, poor man, her father came running into the village like one distracted ; flung himself on the ground, tore his hair ; we could not get him to speak to us.

Hen. And Louisa, who has seen her ?

Sim. We none of us can tell where she is.

Hen. How ! no one know where she is gone ? some accident, sure, has happened to her !

Marg. Don't afflict yourself so.

Hen. Aunt, if she is found, I must rely on you to comfort her ! don't suffer her out of your sight ; this is now all the service you can do me ; your nephew must die ; for my sake, therefore, look upon her as your niece ; she should have been so in reality.

Marg. I promise you

Hen. I could wish to see her again.

Enter Flint and Skirmish.

Flint. Comrade, I am sorry to bring you bad news, but you must now behave yourself like a man ; the hell-hounds are coming for you.

Hen. Already ?

Skir. They are indeed ; here, here, you've occasion enough for it ; drink some of this.

Hen. I am oblig'd to you,—none. Aunt, adieu ! tell
my

THE DESERTER.

LOUISA.

And have I sav'd my Henry's life?—

Dear father, in my joy take part:

I now indeed shall be a wife,

Wife to the idol of my heart.

Thus when the storm, dispersing, flies

Through which the sailor's forc'd to

No more he dreads inclement skies,

But with the tempest leaves his fear.

RUSSET.

Why, why, I pray you, this delay?

Children, your hands in wedlock jo

That I may pass my hours away

In ease and peace through life's dec

This joy's too great; my pride, my b

Both, both in my affection share,

May who delights the other most,

Henceforward be your only care!

SKIRMISH.

I wish your joy may hold you long;

But yet I am not such a sot,

As not to see you all are wrong;

Why is the king to be forgot?

You had been wretched but for him:

Then follow Skirmish, dance and f

Raise every voice, strain ev'ry limb,

Huzza! and cry, Long live the ki

THE COMMISSARY.

IN THREE ACTS.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Mr Zac. Fungus,</i>	-	-	<i>Hay-Market.</i>	<i>Mr Foote.</i>
<i>Mr Isaac Fungus,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Costello.</i>
<i>Mr Gruel,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Shuter.</i>
<i>Young Lovell,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Davis.</i>
<i>Dr Catgut,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Parsons.</i>
<i>Simon,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Pfection.</i>
<i>Mr Bridoun,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Gardner.</i>
<i>Mr Paduasty,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Keen.</i>
<i>Mr Harpy,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Tindal.</i>
<i>La Fleur,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Johnson.</i>
<i>John,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Marshall.</i>
<i>A Hackney-Coachman,</i>	-	-		<i>Mr Parsons.</i>

W O M E N.

<i>Mrs Mechlin,</i>	-	-	<i>Miss Cheney.</i>
<i>Mrs Lovell,</i>	-	-	<i>Mr Shuter.</i>
<i>Dolly,</i>	-	-	<i>Miss Reynolds.</i>
<i>Jenny,</i>	-	-	<i>Mrs Granger.</i>

A C T I.

SCENE, *Mrs MECHLIN'S House.*

[*Loud knocking at the door.*]

Enter JENNY.

RAP, rap, rap, up-stairs and down, from morning to night; if this same commissary stays much longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

Q. IV.

E

Simon

Simon without.

Sim. Is Mrs Mechlin at home?

Jen. No. [*Opens the door.*] Oh, what is it you, Simon?

Enter Simon.

Sim. At your service, sweet Mrs Jane.

Jen. Why, you knock with authority; and what are your commands, Master Simon?

Sim. I come, Madam, to receive those of your mistress. What, Jenny, has she any great affair on the anvil? Her summons is most exceedingly pressing; and you need not be told, child, that a man of my consequence does not trouble himself about trifles.

Jen. Oh, Sir, I know very well you principal actor don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, Ma'am; but, notwithstanding your ironical sneer, it is not every man that will do for your mistress; her agents must have genius and parts: I don't suppose, in the whole bills of mortality, there is so general and extensive a dealer as my friend Mr Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be sure, we have plenty of customers and for various kinds of commodities; it would be pretty difficult, I fancy, to —

Sim. Commodities! Your humble servant, sweet Mr Jane; yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities indeed.

Jen. Mr Simon, I don't understand you; I suppose it is no secret in what sort of goods our dealing consists.

Sim. No, no, they are pretty well known.

Jen. And, to be sure, though now and then, to oblige a customer, my mistress does condescend to smuggle a little —

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs Jane.

Jen. Yet there are no people in the liberty of Westminster that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo.

Jen. The very best of quality are not ashamed to visit my mistress.

Sim. They have reason.

Jen. Respected by the neighbours.

Sim.

Sim. I know it.

Jen. Punctual in her payments.

Sim. To a moment.

Jen. Regular hours.

Sim. Doubtless.

Jen. Never miss the farmant on Sundays.

Sim. I own it.

Jen. Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless now and then when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

Sim. Granted.

Jen. Not at all given to lying, but, like other trades-folks, in the way of her business.

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, Sir, what would you insinuate? Look you, Mr Simon, don't go to cast reflections upon us; don't think to blast the reputation of our—

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny, are you serious?

Jen. Serious! Ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are!

Jen. Upon my word, Mr Simon, you should not give your tongue such a licence; let me tell you, these airs do not become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why where the deuce have I got? sure, I have mistaken the house; is not this Mrs Mechlin's?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs Mechlin, at the sign of the Star, in the parish of St Paul's?

Jen. Bravo.

Sim. That commercial caterpillar?

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures?

Jen. Doubtless.

Sim. That walking warehouse?

Jen. Granted.

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

Sim. That engrosser and seducer of virgins?

Jen. Keep it up, master Simon.

Sim. That foretaller of bagnios?

Jen. Incomparably fine.

Sim. That canting, cozening, money-lending, mate making, pawnbroking — [Loud knocking]

Jen. Mighty well, Sir: here comes my mistress, I shall thank you for the pretty picture you have be pleased to draw.

Sim. Nay, but, dear Jenny——

Jen. She shall be told how lightly she stands in yo favour.

Sim. But, my sweet girl—— [Knock aga]

Jen. Let me go, Mr Simon; don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at onc

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs Jane, and d tate the articles.

Enter Mrs Mechlin, followed by a hackney-coachman w several bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her clea pinned up.

Mrs Mech. So, hussy, what, must I stay all day in t streets? who have we here? the devil's in the wench I think—one of your fellows, I suppose——Oh, is you! how fares it, Simon?

Jen. Madam, you should not have waited a minu but Mr Simon.——

Sim. Hush, hush! you barbarous jade——

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open t door, flew up stairs, fell over the landing-place, a quite barr'd up the way.

Sim. Yes; and I am afraid I have put out my ank Thanks, Jenny; you shall be no loser, you slut. [Ass]

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon.——Oh, Lord have mer upon me, what a round have I taken?——Is the wen petrified? why don't you reach me a chair, don't y see I am tired to death?

Jen. Indeed, Ma'am, you'll kill yourself.

Sim. Upon my word, Madam Mechlin, you shou take a little care of yourself; indeed you labour t hard.

Mrs Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothin only victuals and cloaths, more cost than worship.—W
d

does not the wench take the things from the fellow?
Well, what's your fare?

Coachm. Mistress, its honestly worth half a crown.

Mrs Mech. Give him a couple of shillings, and send him away.

Coachm. I hope you'll tip me the tester to drink?

Mrs Mech. Them there fellows are never contented; drink! stand farther off; why you smell already as strong as a beer-barrel.

Coachm. Mistress, that's because I have already been drinking.

Mrs Mech. And are not you ashamed, you sot, to be eternally guzzling? You had better buy you some cloaths.

Coachm. No, mistress, my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs Mech. Your honour! and pray how does that hinder you?

Coachm. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you, cries, Here coachman, here's something to drink.——

Mrs Mech. Well!

Coachm. Would it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing else? No, mistress, my conscience won't let me, because why, its the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs Mech. Did you ever hear such a blockhead?

Coachm. No, no, mistress; tho' I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour; my cattle, thof' I love 'em, poor beastless, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs Mech. Yes, you and your horses give pretty strong proofs of your honour; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no flesh. Well, Jenny, give him the sixpence; there, there, lay it out as you will.

Coach. It will be to your health, mistress; it shall next at the Meuse, before I go home; I shall be careful to clear my conscience.

Mrs Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coachm. You need not Mistress, your servant.

[Exit Coachman.

Mrs Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny?

Jen. The gentleman, Ma'am, about the Gloucestershire living.

Mrs Mech. He was! Oh oh! what, I suppose his flo-

mach's come down. Does he like the encumbrance? will he marry the party?

Jen. Why, that article seems to go a little against him?

Mrs Mech. Does it so? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, Ma'am, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?—

Jen. Yes, Madam.

Mrs Mech. So that the affair will be a secret to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is to my knowledge a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the custom-house.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs Mech. Ay, and tell him that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchase-money too of that same presentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, Ma'am, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the eigarettes, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl-necklace: the lady goes to Mrs Corneley's to-night; and, if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, Madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, Master Simon.—But I have a great affair in hand—Such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim

Sim. If I, Ma'am, can be of the least use——

Mrs Mech. Of the highest! there is no doing without you.——You know the great——

Enter Jenny.

Jen. I have put the things where you ordered, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit Jenny.* I say, you know the great commissary that is come to lodge in my house. Now they say this Mr Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor; heaven knows how he came by it: but that, you know, is no business of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant, abroad. [*Loud knocking.*] Who the deuce can that be? But let it be who it will, you must not go till I speak to you.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. The widow Loveit, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. What, the old liquorish dowager, from Devonshire Square? show her in. [*Exit Jenny.*] You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon, I shall soon dispatch her as fair. [*Exit Simon.*

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. So so, good morning to you, good Mrs. Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs Mech. You had better sit here, Madam.

Mrs Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—Ugh, ugh, ugh, —[*coughs.*] Consider I have no time to lose, and you are always so full of employment.

Mrs Mech. Forgot you! you shall judge. Mrs Loveit. I have, Ma'am, provided a whole cargo of husbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and fizes: so you see you have nothing to do but choose.

Mrs Lov. To choose, Mrs Mechlin! Lord help me, what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! My poor dear man that's gone, I shall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs Mech. Psha, Madam, don't let us trouble our heads about him, 'tis high time that he was forgot.

Mrs Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick?

Mrs

THE COMMISSARY.

Mrs Mech. Not a jot; the greatest compliment I could pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you son to be fond of the state. But what do you mean quick? Why, he has been bury'd these three weeks.

Mrs Lov. And three days, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! quite an age.

Mrs Lov. Yes; but I shall never forget him living or waking, he's always before me. His swell'd belly, and his poor shrunk legs; Lord bless Mrs Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

Mrs Mech. No!

Mrs Lov. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a nose, and his little weezen face as sharp as a needle—don't mention it, I can never forget him.

Mrs Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance, But, Ma'am, if you continue to be so fond of your husband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin, poor lone widow woman as I am; there's no comfort in my mind; my tenants behind-hand, my servants careless, my children undutiful—Ugh, ugh, ugh.

Mrs Mech. You have a villainous cough, Madam; shall I send for some lozenges?

Mrs Lov. No, I thank you, 'tis nothing at all; just a little trick I've got.

Mrs Mech. But I wonder you shou'd have all these vexations to plague you, Madam, you who are so good and so—

Mrs Lov. Forty thousand in the four-per-cent stock; morning I rise, Mrs Mechlin, besides two houses in Hackney: but then my affairs are so weighty and complicated; there is such tricking in lawyers, and such management in children, that I can't do by myself; I have a helpmate; quite necessary, no matter of course.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I understand you, you marry for convenience; just only to get an assistant, a key to a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs Lov. Nothing else.

Mrs Mech. I thought so; quite prudential; so age is none of your object: you don't want a scolding, giddy, sprightly, young—

Mrs Lov. Young ! Heaven forbid. What, do you think, like some ladies I know, that I want to have my husband taken for one of my grandchildren ? no, no ; thank Heaven, such vain thoughts never enter'd my head.

Mrs Mech. But yet, as your matters stand, he ought not to be so very old neither ; for instance now, of what use to you wou'd be a husband of sixty ?

Mrs Lov. Sixty ! Are you mad, Mrs Mechlin ? what, do you think I want to turn nurse ?

Mrs Mech. Or fifty-five ?

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh, ugh——

Mrs Mech. Or fifty ?

Mrs Lov. Oh ! that's too cunning an age ; men, now-a-days, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or——

Mrs Lov. Shall I, Mrs Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind ?

Mrs Mech. I believe, Ma'am, that will be your best way.

Mrs Lov. Why then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to secure and preserve their obedience will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. Why, I thought you declar'd against youth ?

Mrs Lov. So I do, so I do ; but then, six or seven and twenty is not so very young, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age : for at that time of life men can bustle and stir ; they are not easily check'd, and whatever they take in hand they go through with.

Mrs Lov. True, true.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be said to be useful ; it is the only tear and wear season.

Mrs Lov. Right, right.

Mrs Mech. Well, Ma'am, I see what you want ; and to-morrow about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs Lov. I shan't fail.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. I think I can suit you.

Mrs Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs Mech. You may depend upon't, I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs Lov. But, Mrs Mechlin, be sure don't let him be older than that, not above seven or eight and twenty at most; and let it be as soon as you conveniently can.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, Ma'am.

Mrs Lov. Because, you know, the more children I have by the second venter, the greater plague I shall prove to those I had by the first.

Mrs Mech. True, Ma'am. You had better lean on me to the door: but, indeed, Mrs Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful; indeed.

Mrs Mech. Ah, they deserve it; you can't think what sad whelps they turn out; no punishment can be too much; if their poor father cou'd but have foreseen they wou'd have——why did I mention the dear man? it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him.——To-morrow about this time, Mrs Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs Mech. I can't say.

Mrs Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Here, John, take care of your mistress. [Exit Mrs Loveit.]

A good morning to you, Ma'am. Jenny. bid Simon come up.—A husband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clause to the act to prevent the old from marrying clandestinely as well as the young. I am sure there are as many unsuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter Simon.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr Fungus's servants below?

Sim. Three or four strange faces.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, some of that troop, I suppose; come, Simon, be seated.—Well, Simon, as I was telling you; this Mr Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart-load of money, and who (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts——

Sim. I formerly knew him, Ma'am.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs Mech. I am glad of that—this spark, I say, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determin'd to rival them too in every other accomplishment.

Sim. Will that be so easy? why he must be upwards of—

Mrs Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to set up for a gentleman.

Mrs Mech. But fine talents, you know, and a strong inclination.—

Sim. That, indeed—

Mrs Mech. Then, I promise you, he spares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent!

Mrs Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning something or other from morning to night; my house is a perfect academy, such a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, musicians—but, however, to sweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, Ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs Mech. But one of his studies is really diverting, I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs Mech. Oratory.—You know his first ambition is to have a seat in a certain assembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr What d'ye Call'um, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon speaking, and there is such haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll see enough on't yourself; for, do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, Madam!

Mrs Mech. Ay, his privy counsellor, his confidant, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that answer?

Mrs Mech. There I am coming—You are to know, that our Squire Wou'd-be is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing, forsooth, will go down but a person of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter con-

contempt, a grand alliance is all that he wants ; so that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two-pence how low and empty her purse is.

Sim. But, Ma'am, won't it be difficult to meet with a suitable subject ? I believe there are few ladies of quality that ———

Mrs Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed !

Mrs Mech. You know my niece Dolly ?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs Mech. What think you of her ?

Sim. Of Miss Dolly, for what ?

Mrs Mech. For what ? you are plaguily dull ; why, a woman of fashion, you dunce.

Sim. To be sure Miss Dolly is very deserving, and few ladies have a better appearance ; but, bless me, Madam, here people of rank are so generally known, that the slightest inquiry wou'd poison your project.

Mrs Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter ; there, I think, I am pretty secure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the case. —

Mrs Mech. In the first place, Mr Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's something.

Mrs Mech. Then to baffle any idle curiosity, we are not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upstart nobility to your Harrys and Edwards. No, no, we are scions from an older stock ; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal descendent from Hercules Alexander, earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the First.

Sim. Odso ! a qualification for a canon of Strasburg. So then, it seems, you are transplanted from the banks of the Tweed ; cry you mercy ! But how will Miss Dolly be able to manage the accent ?

Mrs Mech. Very well ; she was two years an actress in Edenborough.

Sim. That's true ; is the overture made, has there been any interview ?

Mrs Mech. Several : we have no dislike to his person ; can't but own he is rather agreeable ; and as to his proposals, they are greater than we cou'd desire : but

we

we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs Mech. Not so easily; and now comes your part: but first, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worse! The ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, these peering rascals took from me in Sussex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon! why then I am afraid there's an end of your traffic.

Sim. Totally: for, now those fellows have got the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Then you are entirely at leisure?

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family-servant is waiting here on the lady; but dispatch'd to the North with a view to negotiate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble Peer's resolution. Prepare you a suitable equipage, I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady.

Sim. The contents?—

Mrs Mech. Oh, you may read them within: now with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers; but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily play'd.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Miss Dolly, Ma'am, in a hackney coach at the corner; may she come in?

Mrs Mech. Are the servants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs Mech. Be sure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, Ma'am. [Exit Jenny.]

Mrs Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the furthestmost cushion in the window; run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way;

for it is me that must introduce you above. [*Exit Simon.*] So, things seem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me easy for life. To say truth, I begin to be tir'd of my trade. To be sure, the profits are great; but then, so are the risks that I run: besides, my private practice begins to be smok'd. Ladies are suppos'd to come here with different designs than merely to look at my goods: some of my best customers, too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Those aflums, they give a dreadful blow to my business. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could supply him with choice in an hour; but the market is spoiled, and a body might as soon produce a hare or a partridge as a pretty——[*Enter Dolly.*]——So, niece, are all things prepar'd; have you got the papers from Harpy?

Dol. Here they are, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. Let me see—Oh the marriage-articles for Fuagus to sign. Have you got the contract about you?

Dol. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I——Here it is; this, Dolly, you must sign and seal before witness.

Dol. To what end, aunt?

Mrs Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your husband, that he may reimburse your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dol. I hope my aunt does not suspect that I can ever be wanting——

Mrs Mech. No, my dear, not in the least: but it is best, Dolly, in order to prevent all retrospection, that we settle accounts before you change your condition.

Dol. But, Ma'am, may not I see the contents?

Mrs Mech. The contents, love? of what use will that be to you? Sign and seal, that's enough.

Dol. But, aunt, I choose to see what I sign.

Mrs Mech. To see! what, then you suspect me?

Dol. No, Ma'am; but a little caution——

Mrs Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! how dare you dispute my commands? have not I made you,

you, raised you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dol. Madam, I——

Mrs Mech. Answer me, hussy, was not you a beggar's brat at my door; did not I, out of compassion, take you into my house, call you my niece, and give you suitable breeding?

Dol. True, Madam.

Mrs Mech. And what return did you make me? You was scarce got into your teens, you forward slut, but you brought me a child almost as big as yourself; and a delightful father you chose for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre musician; that sick monkey-face maker of crotchets; that eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tail'd girls of the town. Oh, you low slut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vex'd me; but a fiddler!

Dol. For heaven's sake——

Mrs Mech. After that you elop'd, commenc'd stroller, and in a couple of years return'd to town in your original trim with scarce a rag to your back.

Dol. Pray, Ma'am——

Mrs Mech. Did not I, notwithstanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good? found you a husband as rich as a Jew, just brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuse to sign a paltry paper?

Dol. Pray, Madam, give it me, I will sign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs Mech. You will; yes, so you had best. And what's become of the child, have you done as I order'd?

Dol. The Doctor was not at home; but the nurse left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dol. Not a word.

Mrs Mech. Then he is meditating some mischief, I warrant. However, let our good stars secure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky, tho', that Mr Fungus has chosen the Doctor for his master of music; but as yet he has not been here, and, if possible, we must prevent him.

Enter JENNY, hastily.

Jen. Mr Fungus the tallow-chandler, Ma'am, is crossing the way; shall I say you are at home?

Mrs Mech. His brother has servants enough, let some of them answer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exit Dolly and Jenny.*]

—[*One knocks at the door.*] Ay, that's the true tap of the trader: this old brother of ours, tho', is smoky and shrewd, and, tho' an odd, a sensible fellow; we must guard against him: if he gets but an inkling, but the slightest suspicion, our project is marr'd—[*A noise without.*] What the deuce is the matter? As I live, a squabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hir'd this morning. This may make mirth, I'll listen a little.

[*Retires.*]

Enter Mr Isaac Fungus, driving in La Fleur.

I. Fun. What, is there nobody in the house that can give me an answer? where's my brother, you rascal?

La Fleur. *Je n'entend pas.*

I. Fun. Pash! what the devil is that? Answer yes or no, is my brother at home? don't shrug up your shoulders at me, you—Oh, here comes a rational being.

Enter Mrs Meehlin.

Madam Meehlin, how fares it? this here lanthorn-jaw'd rascal won't give me an answer, and indeed would scarce let me into the house.

La Fleur. *C'est gros bourgeois a fait une tapage de diable.*

Mrs Mech. *Ey donc c'est le frere de Monsieur.*

La Fleur. *Le frere! Mon Dieu!*

I. Fun. What is all this? what the devil lingo is the fellow a-talking?

Mrs Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fun. From France! and is that the best of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and insult us at home. People make such a rout about smuggling their Frenchified goods; their men do us more mischief. If we could but hinder the importing of them—

Mrs Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton, I see that, Mr Isaac.

I. Fun. I warrant me: is brother Zachary at home?

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Above stairs, Sir.

I. Fun. Any company with him?

Mrs Mech. Not any to hinder your visit. *La Fleur, ouvrez le porte.*

I. Fun. Get along you—*Mrs Mechlin*, your servant. [*Exit Mrs Mechlin.*] I can't think what the devil makes your quality so fond of the *Monseurs*; for my part, I do'nt see—March and be hang'd to you—you footy-fae'd— [*Exit I. Fungus, and La Fleur**].

Mrs Mech. Come, Dolly, you now may appea

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Mr Paduafoy, Ma'am, the Spitalfields weaver; he has been waiting this hour, and says he has some people at home—

Mrs Mech. Let him enter; in a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly. [*Exit Jenny.*]

Enter Paduafoy.

Mrs Mech. Mr Paduafoy, you may load yourself home with those silks, they won't do for my market.

Pad. Why, what's the matter, Madam?

Mrs Mech. Matter! you are a pretty fellow indeed! you are a tradesman! 'tis lucky I know you, things might have been worse; let us settle accounts, Mr Paduafoy; you'll see no more of my money.

Pad. I shall be sorry for that, *Mrs Mechlin*.

Mrs Mech. Sorry! answer me one question; am not I the best customer that ever you had?

Pad. I confess it.

Mrs Mech. Have not I mortgaged my precious soul, by swearing to my quality-customers that the stuff from your looms was the produce of Lyons?

Pad. Granted.

Mrs Mech. And unless that had been believ'd, could you have sold them a yard, nay, a nail?

Pad. I believe, not.

Mrs Mech. Very well. Did not, Sir, I procure you more money for your curs'd goods, when sold as the manufacture of France, than as mere English they could have ever produced you?

Pad. I never deny'd it.

F 3

Mrs

* First act ends here, when done as an after-piece.

‘ *Mrs Mech.* Then are not you a pretty fellow, to blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

‘ *Pad.* Ma, Madam!

‘ *Mrs Mech.* Yes, you.

‘ *Pad.* As how?

‘ *Mrs Mech.* Did not you tell me these pieces of silk were entire, and the only ones you had made of that pattern?

‘ *Pad.* I did.

‘ *Mrs Mech.* Now mind. Last Monday I left them as just landed, upon a pretence to secure them from seizure, at the old countess of Furbelow’s, by whose means I was sure, at my own price, to get rid of them both; and who should come in last night at the ball at the Mansion-house, where my lady unluckily happen’d to be, with a full suit of the blue pattern upon her back, but Mrs Deputy Dowlas, dizen’d out like a duchess.

‘ *Pad.* Mrs Deputy Dowlas! Is it possible?

‘ *Mrs Mech.* There is no denying the fact; but that was not all. If, indeed, Mrs Deputy had behaved like a gentlewoman, and sworn they had been sent her from Paris, why there the thing would have died: but see what it is to have to do with mechanics; the fool owned she had them from you. I should be glad to see any of my customers at a loss for a lie; but those trim-perry traders, Mr Paduasoy, you’ll never gain any credit by them.

‘ *Pad.* This must be a trick of my wife’s; I know the women are intimate; but this piece of intelligence will make a hot house. None of my fault indeed, Mrs Mechlin; I hope, Ma’am, this won’t make any difference?

‘ *Mrs Mech.* Difference! I don’t believe I shall be able to smuggle a gown for you these six months. What is in that bundle?

‘ *Pad.* Some India handkerchiefs, that you promis’d to procure of a supercargo at Woolwich for Sir Thomas Calico’s lady.

‘ *Mrs Mech.* Are you pretty forward with the light sprigg’d waistcoats from Italy?

‘ *Pad.* They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs

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Mrs Mech. You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of autumn; but you may make me immediately a fresh sortment of foreign ribbons for summer.

Pad. Any other commands, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Not at present, I think.

Pad. I wish you, Madam, a very good morning.

Mrs Mech. Mr Paduasoy! Lord, I had lik'd to have forgot. You must write an anonymous letter to the custom-house, and send me some old silks to be seized; I must treat the town with a bonfire: it will make a fine paragraph for the papers, and at the same time advertise the public where such things may be had.

Pad. I shan't fail, Madam. [*Exit Paduasoy.*]

Mrs Mech. Who says now that I am not a friend to my country? I think the Society for the Encouragement of Arts should vote me a premium. I am sure I am one of the greatest encouragers of our own manufactures. [*Exit Mrs Mechlin.*]

A C T II.

*Enter ZACHARY FUNGUS, ISAAC FUNGUS, and
MRS MECHLIN.*

ZAC. FUNGUS.

BROTHER Isaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But first answer me this: Can knowledge do a man any harm?

I. Fun. No, farting; what is befitting a man for to learn.

Z. Fun. To learn! and how should you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn? Stick to your trade, master tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you say in your conscience, as how it is decent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almost lost the use of your legs?

Z. Fun. Lost the use of my legs! to see but the malice of men! Do but ask Mrs Mechlin; now, Ma'am, does not Mrs Dukes say, that, considering my time, I have made a wonderful progress?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac?

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Isaac. Why, I ha' not been

been at it passing a couple of months; and we have at our school two aldermen and a serjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. There now, Mrs Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, Ma'am, does not master allow, that, of my age, I am the most hopeful scholar he has?

Mrs Mech. I can't but say, Mr Isaac, that the 'squire has made a most prodigious improvement.

Z. Fun. Do you hear that? I wish we had but a kit, I would show you what I could do: one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha. There are risings and sinkings!

Mrs Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fun. A'n't it! Why, before next winter is over, he says he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent you may see me amble at a ridotto with an opera-finger

Mrs Mech. And I warrant he acquits himself as well as the best.

I. Fun. Mercy on me! and pray, brother, that thing like a sword in your hand, what may the use of that implement be?

Z. Fun. This? oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil?

Z. Fun. Ay, a little instrument, by which we who are gentlemen are instructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill! Marry, heaven forbid; I hope you have no such bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac, you was used to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law: but now I am another-guess person; I have been in camps, cantoons, and intrenchments; I have marched over bridges and breaches; I have seen the Ezel and Wezell; I'm got as rich as a Jew; and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a Jew! Ah, Zac, Zac! but if you had not had another-guess trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether so rich: but now you have got all this wealth, why not sit down and enjoy it in quiet?

Z.

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac, do you pretend to know life? are you acquainted with the beaux d'esprits of the age?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; then how should you know what belongs to gentility?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zae? I hope I am every whit as well born.

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the breeding is all: consider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business; hey, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. And as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, is what the art of fencing consists?

I. Fun. How should I?

Z. Fun. Why, it is short; there are but two rules: the first is, to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can; the second, to be careful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how is this to be done?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough: for, do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line of your body, it is impossible he ever should hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way, or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil! Mrs Mechlin, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac——

[Offers him a foil.]

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These bourgeois are so frightful. Mrs Mechlin, will you, Ma'am, do me the favour to push at me a little? Mind, brother, when she thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentleman is. Now I have been told, d'ye see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has in public company call'd me a cuckold——

I. Fun. A cuckold? But how can that be? because why, brother Zac, you ben't married.

Z. Fun. But as I am just going to be marry'd, that may very well happen, you know.

Mrs Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has said, I am a cuckold. Upon which, the first time I set eyes on Captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall or at Ranelagh, I accost him in a courteous, genteel-like manner.

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Isaac—— in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; Captain Hopkins, your servant.

I. Fun. Why, you call'd him but now Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Psha! you blockhead, I tell you the name does not signify nothing——Your servant; shall I crave your ear for a moment? The Captain politely replies, Your commands, good Mr Fungus? Then we walk side by side——come here, Mrs Mechlin.—[*They walk up and down*] for some time as civil as can be. Mind, brother Isaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey!——no, t'other side, Mrs Mechlin——that's right——I hear, Captain Wilkins.

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Isaac, be quiet——Wilkins, that you have taken some liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't understand——

I. Fun. Don't swear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fun. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow?

I. Fun. But you are grown such a reprobate since you went to the wars——

Z. Fun. Mrs Mechlin, stop the tongue of that blockhead; why, dunce, I am speaking by rule, and Mrs Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs Mech. Oh, always.

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't understand. Liberties with you, cries the Captain; where, when, and in what manner? Last Friday night, in company at the St Alban's,

Alban's, you call'd me a buck; and moreover said, that my horns were exalted. Now, Sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, Sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How, Sir! do you deny my gentility? Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—Draw, Sir. Now push, Mrs Mechlin. [*They fence.*] There I parry tierce, there I parry carte. there I parry —Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs Mechlin.

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well push'd, Mrs Mechlin.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she pushed me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts, that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinc'd of your skill; but I think, brother Zac, you hinted an intencion of marrying; is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why, this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray, is it a secret; to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret, no; I am proud of the match; she brings me all that I want, her veins full of good blood; such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! ay, such a name, Lord, we have nothing like it in London: none of your stunted little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trotts; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs Mech. Lady Sacharissa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you. Lineally descended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the first.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I can't say quite all; for the right honourable peer that is to be my papa, (who by the bye is as proud

proud as the devil) has flatly renounc'd the alliance; calls me here in his letter Plebeian; and says, if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pyeballs.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman, who (between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my person has prov'd too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. It is resolv'd?

Z. Fun. Fix'd.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so? come, come, brother Isaac, don't be uneasy, I have a shrewd guess at your grievance; but though you may not be suffer'd to see lady Scracarissa at first, yet who knows before long I may have interest enough with her to bring it about; and in the mean time you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it?

Mrs Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is: why, but yesterday, says her ladyship to me, Though, Mrs Mechlin, it can't be suppos'd that I shou'd admit any of the Fungus family into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure; not at first, as I said.

Mrs Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac? there's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable: but people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious: but here, brother Zac, you mistake me; it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live together a month?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own wife like a paltry dependent?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourself and your orders condemn'd by your servants?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To see your property devour'd by your lady's eggarily cousins, who, notwithstanding, won't vouchsafe you a nod?—

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her ending, come at her calling, dine by yourself when she has bettermost company, and sleep six nights a-week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to disobey, have the impudence to dispute the sovereign will and pleasure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you would be at; you don't mean I should marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I should with pleasure see you equally match'd, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You would? I don't doubt it; but that is a pleasure you never will have. Look you, Isaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have; and if you say any more, I'll not be contented with that, for damme I'll marry a duchess.

Enter La Fleur.

La Fleur. *Le Maître pour donner d'éloquence.*

Z. Fun. What does the puppy say, Mrs Mechlin? for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a speaker.

Z. Fun. Odzooks! a special fine fellow; let's have him.

Mrs Meeb. Faites le entres. [*Exit La Fleur.*]

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another—

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the finest fellow of all, it is he that is to make me a man; and hark ye, brother, if I should chance to rise in the state, no more words, your business is done.

I. Fun. What, I reckon some member of parliament?

Z. Fun. A member! Lord help you, brother Isaac, this man is a whole senate himself. Why, it is the famous oratorian that has publish'd the book.

I. Fun. What, Mr Gruel.

Z. Fun. The same.

I. Fun. Yes, I have seen his name in the news.

Z. Fun. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me such secrets: why, do you know, Isaac, by what means 'tis we speak?

I. Fun. Speak! why we speak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No!

Z. Fun. No. He says we speak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and without them we only should bellow.

I. Fun. But surely the mouth—

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing; only just a cavity for the air to pass through.

I. Fun. Indeed!

Z. Fun. That's all; and when the cavity's small, little sounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed; observe now in whistling and bawling—[*Whistles and bawls*]—Do you see? Oh, he is a miraculous man!

I. Fun. But of what use is all this?

Z. Fun. But 'tis knowledge, an't it; and of what signification is that, you fool! And then as to use, why he can make me speak in any manner he pleases; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the subject requires—But here he is.

Enter Mr Gruel.

Mr Gruel, your servant; I have been holding forth in your praise.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr Fungus; but to your
decla-

declamation, or recitation (as Quintilian more properly terms it), I shall be indebted for much future praise, in as much as the reputation of the scholar does (as I may say) confer, or rather as it were reflect, a marvellous kind of lustre on the fame of the master himself.

Z. Fun. There, Isaac! didst ever hear the like? he talks just as if it were all out of a book; what wou'd you give to be able to utter such words?

I. Fun. And what shou'd I do with them? them holiday-terms wou'd not pass in my shop; there's no buying and selling with them.

Gruel. Your observation is pithy and pertinent. Different stations different idioms demand; polished periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baser kind of coin, for the ease and convenience of inferior traffic, so it is indulg'd with a vernacular or vitious vulgar phraseology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce. But I doubt, Sir, I soar above the region of your comprehension?

I. Fun. Why, if you wou'd come down a step or two, I can't say but I shou'd understand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to shine at a vestry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can supply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no such desire.

Gruel. Not to lose time; your brother here, (for such I find the gentleman is), in other respects a common man like yourself——

Z. Fun. No better.

Gruel. Observe how alter'd by means of my art: are you prepar'd in the speech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel. Let your gesticulations be chaste, and your muscular movements consistent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——[*Enter Jenny, and whispers Mrs Mechlin.*]

Mrs Mechlin, you'll stay?

Mrs Mech. A little business, I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit Mrs Mechlin.*]

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you please, Sir, there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face; one, two, three; now off you go.

Z. Fun. When I consider the vast importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various vicissitudes that this soil has sustain'd; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were, and what we their civilized successors are; when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and chefnuts—

Gruel. Pignuts, good Sir, if you please.

Z. Fun. You are right; crab-apples and pig-nuts; and that we feast on green-pease, and on custards: when I trace in the recording historical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now know we have fish by land-carriage, I am lost in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail, Commerce! daughter of industry, consort to credit, parent of opulence, full sister to liberty, and great-grandmother to the art of navigation—

I. Fun. Why, this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fun. Prithee, Isaac, be quiet—art of navigation—a—a—vigation—Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not; this day's performance has largely fulfill'd your yesterday's promise.

Z. Fun. But I han't half done, the best is to come; let me just give him that part about turnpegs—for the sloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impassable bogs, that the languid but generous steed travelled through; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turnpegs.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Your riding-master is below.

Z. Fun. Gadso! then here we must end. You'll pardon me, good Mr Gruel; for as I want to be a finished gentleman as soon as I can, it is impossible for me to stick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the mul-

multiplicity of your avocations do (as I may say) in some measure cicatrize the otherwise mortal wound on this occasion sustained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatrize! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man. Well, Mr Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your slightest vocation.

Z. Fun. I wish, brother Isaac, I could have staid; you should have heard me oration away, like a lawyer, about pleadings and presidents; but all in good time.—
[Exit Fungus.]

Mrs Mech. This gentleman, Sir, will gain you vast credit.

Gruel. Yes, Ma'am, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confess, are enormous; and, as to you I am indebted for this promising pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an instantaneous and gratis lecture on that species of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Sir, I have no sort of occasion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man, (for such I define him to be), a male or masculine manner belongs—

Mrs Mech. Any other time, good Mr Gruel.

Gruel. So to that biped woman, she participating of his general nature, the word *homo* in Latin being promiscuously used as woman or man—

Mrs Mech. For heaven's sake—

Gruel. But being cast in a more tender and delicate mold—

Mrs Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The soft, supple, insinuating graces—

Mrs Mech. I must insist—

Gruel. Do appertain (as I may say) in a more peculiar or more particular manner—

Mrs Mech. Nay, then—

Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities—

Mrs Mech. I must thrust you out of my house.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

Mrs Mech. Was there ever such a—[pushing him out.]

Re-enter Gruel.

Gruel. To those eminent, hazardous, and (as I may say) perilous conflicts, which so often—

Mrs Mech. Get down stairs, and be hang'd to you. [*Pushes him out.*] There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom; I hope I han't done him a mischief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr Gruel?—No, all's safe; I hear him going on with his speech; an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent, indeed; I wonder all those people don't turn your head; Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I am pretty well us'd to 'em. But who comes here? Mr Isaac, if you will step into the next room, I have something to communicate that well deserves your attention. [*Exit Isaac Fungus.*]

Enter Simon.

Sim. Doctor Catgut at the foot of the stairs.

Mrs Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilst he is here. [*Exit Simon.*] I hope he has not heard of the pretty present we sent him to-day.

Enter Dr Catgut.

Dr Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, Ma'am, received a couple of compliments from your mansion this morning; one I find from a lodger of your's; the other, I presume, from your niece; but for the last, I rather suppose I am indebted to you.

Mrs Mech. Me! Indeed, Doctor, you are widely mistaken; I assure you, Sir, since your business broke out, I have never set eyes of her once.

Dr Cat. Then I am falsely informed.

Mrs Mech. But after all, you must own it is but what you deserve; I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off these tricks.

Dr Cat. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? my constitution requires it.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! I should not have thought it.

Dr Cat. Then the dear little devils are so desperately fond.

Mrs Mech. Without doubt.

Dr Cat. And for frolic, flirtation, diligence, dress, and address—

Mrs Mech. To be sure.

Dr Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myself, will be found that can match me.

Mrs Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin ; let me perish, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs Mech. Indeed!

Dr Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I should be positively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs Mech. Ay, but, Doctor, consider I am not of a trifling age, it would be only losing your time.

Dr Cat. Ha, so coy ! But a-propos, Molly, this lodger of your's ; who is he, and what does he want ?

Mrs Mech. You have heard of the great Mr Fungus ?

Dr Cat. Well !

Mrs Mech. Being informed of your skill and abilities, he has sent for you to teach him to sing.

Dr Cat. Me teach him to sing ! What, does the scoundrel mean to affront me ?

Mrs Mech. Affront you !

Dr Cat. Why, don't you know, child, that I quite-
ted that paltry profession ?

Mrs Mech. Not I.

Dr Cat. Oh, entirely renounc'd it.

Mrs Mech. Then what may you follow at present ?

Dr Cat. Me!—nothing; I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs Mech. A poet !

Dr Cat. A poet. The muses ; you know I was al-
ways fond of the ladies : I suppose you have heard of
Shakespeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of
Mikton and Hudibras ?

Mrs Mech. I have.

Dr Cat. I shall blast all their laurels, by gad ; I have
just given the public a taste, but there's a belly-full for
them in my larder at home.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, you surprise me ; but
pray, is poetry a trade to be learn'd ?

Dr Cat. Doubtless. Capital as I am, I have not ac-
quired it above a couple of years.

Mrs Mech. And cou'd you communicate your art to
another ?

Dr Cat. To be sure. Why I have here in my poc-
ket, my dear, a whole folio of rhimes, from Z quite to
great A. Let us see ; A, ay, here it begins, A, afe,
pals, grafs, mafs, lasf ; and so quite thro' the alphabet
down

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down to Z. Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs Mech. And what do you do with those rhimes?

Dr Cat. Oh, we supply them.

Mrs Mech. Supply them?

Dr Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will show you. . Last week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made these rhimes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the stocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that sort of writing.—First, *She* :

There to see the sluggish ass,
Through the meadows as we pass,
Eating up the farmer's grafs,
Blyth and merry, by the mase,
As a lively country lass.

Mrs Mech. Very pretty.

Dr Cat. A'n't it? Then *he* replies :

Hear the farmer cry out, Zounds !
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beast has broke my mounds;
If the parish has no pounds,
Kill, and give him to the hounds.

Then *Da Capo*, both join in repeating the last stanza, and this, tack'd to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You observe?

Mrs Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is desirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr Cat. In that case, he may command me, my dear; and I promise you, in a couple of months, he shall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs Mech. At present he is a little engaged; but as soon as the honey-moon is over——

Dr Cat. Honey-moon! Why, is he going to be marry'd?

Mrs Mech. This evening, I fancy.

Dr Cat. The finest opportunity in nature for an introduction: I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin, of my own composition, such an epithalmium.

Mrs Mech. Thalmium, what's that?

Dr Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compose at the solemnization of weddings.

Mrs Mech. Oh, ho!

Dr

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Dr Cat. It is set to music already, for I still compose for myself.

Mrs Mech. You do?

Dr Cat. What think you now of providing a band, and serenading the 'Squire to-night! It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs Mech. The prettiest thought in the world. But I hear Mr Fungus's bell. You'll excuse me, dear Doctor, you may suppose we are busy.

Dr Cat. No apology then, I'll about it this instant.

Mrs Mech. As soon as you please.—Any thing to get you out of the way. [Aside, and exit.]

Dr Cat. Your obsequious, good Madam Meehlin. But, notwithstanding all your fine speeches, I shrewdly suspect my blessed bargain at home was a present from you; and what shall I do with it?—These little embarrasses we men of intrigue are eternally subject to. There will be no sending it back; she will never let it enter the house.—Hey! gad, a lucky thought is come into my head—this serenade is finely contrived—Madam Mechlin shall have her cousin again, for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double base-viol; so the bawd shall have a concert as well as the 'Squire.—
[Exit Dr Catgut.]

A C T III.

Enter HARPY, YOUNG LOVEIT, and JENNY.

HARPY.

TELL your mistress my name is *Harpy*; she knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?

Har. The same. [Exit Jenny.] 'Ay, ay, young gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your business is done. You knew Kitty Williams, that marry'd Mr Abednigo Potiphar the Jew broker?

T. Lov. I did.

Har. And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champanfy, from the isle of St Kitts?

T. Lov. I have seen him.

Har. All owing to her. Her success in that branch

of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

T. Lov. Indeed! She must be very adroit.

Har. Adroit! You shall judge. I will tell you a case: you know the large brick-house at Peckham, with a turret at top?

T. Lov. Well.

Har. There liv'd Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite the cheefemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turn'd of fourteen, and under the wing of an old maiden aunt as watchful as a dragon—but hush—I hear Mrs Mechlin, I'll take another season to finish my tale.

T. Lov. But, Mr Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to gossiping, I wou'd rather my real name was a secret till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossiping! She, Lord help you, she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

T. Lov. That may be; but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well, as you please.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Your very humble servant, good Madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr Harpy; won't you be seated, Sir?

T. Lov. Ma'am?

[They sit down.]

Mrs Mech. And pray, Sir, how can I serve you?

Har. Why, Ma'am, the gentleman's situation is—but, Sir, you had better state your case to Mrs Mechlin yourself.

T. Lov. Why, you are to know, Ma'am, that I am just escap'd from the university, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly esteem'd.

Mrs Mech. Very obliging! I must own, Sir, I have had a very great respect for that learned body ever since they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of music.

T. Lov. Yes, Ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Do you know him, Sir? I expect him here every minute to instruct a lodger of mine.

T. Lov. Not intimately. Just arriv'd, but last night; upon my coming to town, I found my father deceas'd, and all his fortune devis'd to his relict my mother.

Mrs Mech. What, the whole!

T. Lov. Every shilling. That is, for her life.

Mrs Mech. And to what sum may it amount?

T. Lov. My mother is eternally telling me, that after her I shall inherit fifty or sixty thousand at least.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, a capital sum.

T. Lov. But of what use, my dear Mrs Mechlin, since she refuses to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it; and while the grass grows—You know the proverb—

Mrs Mech. What, I suppose, you want something for present subsistence?

T. Lov. Just my situation.

Mrs Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourself?

T. Lov. I am resolved to be guided by you.

Mrs Mech. What do you think of a wife?

T. Lov. A wife!

Mrs Mech. Come, come, don't despise my advice: when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better resource than a usurer; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleasure in repairing the injuries done by fortune to handsome young fellows.

Har. Mrs Mechlin has reason.

T. Lov. But, dear Ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs Mech. Do! Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little stricken in years; make her your banker and steward. If you say but the word, before night, I'll give you a widow with two thousand a year in her pocket.

T. Lov. Two thousand a-year! a pretty employment, if the residence cou'd but be dispens'd with.

Mrs Mech. What do you mean by residence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tack'd to his wife's petticoat: when she is in town,

town; be you in the country; as she shifts do you shift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and, let me tell you, you won't find a more easy condition; twelve months subsistence for one month's labour!

Y. Lov. Two thousand a-year, you are sure?

Mrs Mech. The least penny.

Y. Lov. Well, Madam, you shall dispose of me just as you please.

Mrs Mech. Very well; if you will call in half an hour at farthest, I believe we shall finish the business.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

Mrs Mech. Precisely. Oh, dispatch is the very life and soul of my trade. Mr Harpy will tell you my terms; you will find them reasonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am sure we shall have no dispute about those.

Y. Lov. No, no.—[*Going.*]

Mrs Mech. Oh, but Mr Harpy, it may be proper to mention that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of sixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart; it is the purse, not the person, I want! Sixty! she is quite a girl; I wish with all my soul she was ninety.

Mrs Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I see that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, sweet Mrs Mechlin, adieu. [*Exeunt Young Loveit and Harpy.*]

Mrs Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonshire-square; and now to cater for my commissary. Here he comes.

Enter Fungus and Bridoun.

Fun. So, in six weeks—Oh, Mrs Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conscious that in this step she descends from her dignity; but being desirous to screen you from the fury of her noble relations, she is determined to let them see that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fung. Very kind, very obliging, indeed! But, Mrs Mechlin, as the family is so furious, I reckon we shall never be reconcil'd.

Mrs Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought

bought commissions for her three younger brothers, discharged the mortgage on the paternal estate, and portioned off eight or nine of her sisters, it is not impossible but my lord may be prevailed on to suffer your name——

Fun. Do you think so?

Mrs Mech. But then a work of time, Mr Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay; I know very well, things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. But I must prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are sent to her ladyship?

Mrs Mech. To be sure.

Fun. And the ring for her ladyship, and her ladyship's licence?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyship's parson too; all are prepar'd.

Fun. Parson! why, won't her ladyship please to be marry'd at Powl's?

Mrs Mech. Lord, Mr Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition would bear to be seen in public at once with a person like you?

Fun. That's true; I——

Mrs Mech. No, no; I have sent to Dr Tickletext, and the business will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyship pleases, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. You will get dress'd as soon as you can.

Fun. I shall only take a short lesson from Mr Bridoun, and then wait her ladyship's pleasure. Mrs Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being so is kept a secret from her.

Fun. Never fear. [*Exit Mrs Mechlin.*]——Well, Mr Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little?——

Brid. A great deal.

Fun. And that in a month or six weeks I may be able to prance upon a long-tail'd horse in Hyde-park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vast pleasant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the King's-road, side by side with the la-

dies, in the thick of the dust ; but that I must not hope for this summer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it close.

Fun. Never fear, I shan't be sparing of—But come, come, let us get to our business—John, have the carpenters brought home my new horse ? [*Enter John.*

John. It is here, Sir, upon the top of the stairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an instant. [*Exit John.*] What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr Bridoun, to the making a gentleman. And do your gentlemen-born now (for I reckon you have had of all sorts) take as much pains as we do ?

Brid. To be sure ; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is something in that ; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuter now in catching their larning.

Brid. Dispositions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay, something in nater, I warrant ; as they say the children of blackamoors will swim as soon as they come into the world.

[*Enter servants with a wooden horse.*]
Oh, here he is. Ods me ! it is a stately fine beast.

Brid. Here, my lads, place it here—very well. Where's your switch, Mr Fungus ?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now let me see you vault nimbly into your seat. Zounds ! you are got on the wrong side, Mr Fungus ?

Fun. I am so, indeed, but we'll soon rectify that. Now we are right : may I have leave to lay hold of the mane ?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try ; but this steed is so devilish tall—Mr Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me ?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he shou'd, he can't kick ; that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now mind your position.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There.

Brid.

Brid. And your shoulders fall easily back.

Fun. Ho——there.

Brid. Your switch perpendicular in your right hand——
your right——that is it: your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fun. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at first.

Brid. Very well: preserve your position.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you easy?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr Bridoun,
I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay, I can't think but this here horse stands
still very near as fast as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho, stop the horse: Zounds! I'm out of the
stirrups, I can't sit him no longer; there I go.——

[Falls off.]

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fun. My left hip has a little confusion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident; it might happen
to the very best rider in England.

Fun. Indeed!

Brid. We have such things happen every day at the
manege; but you are vastly improv'd.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little; and, Mr
Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a
live horse?

Brid. The very instant you are able to keep your seat
on a dead one.——

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Bless me, Mr Fungus, how you are tri-
fling your time! I expect lady Sacharissa every moment,
and see what a trim you are in.

Fun. I beg pardon, good Madam Mechlin. I'll be
equipp'd in a couple of minutes; where will her ladyship
please to receive me?

Mrs Mech. In this room, to be sure; come, stir, stir.

Fung. I have had a little fall from my horse—I'll go as fast as I—Mr Bridoun, will you lend me a lift?

[*Exeunt Fungus and Bridoun.*]

Mrs Mech. There——Jenny, show Mrs Loveit in here——Who's there——

Enter Servants.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haste. Madam, if you'll step in here for a moment.

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. So, so, Mrs Mechlin; well, you see I am true to my time; and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs Mech. Beyond expectations.

Mrs Lov. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs Mech. Ay, and such a party, you might search the town round before you cou'd meet with his fellow: he'll suit you in every respect.

Mrs Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman?

Mrs Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding, none of your little whipper-snapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a presence as portly; he has one fault indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs Lov. What is it?

Mrs Mech. His age.

Mrs Lov. Age! how, how?

Mrs Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid: not above twenty at most.

Mrs Lov. Well, well, so he answers in every thing else, we must overlook that; for, Mrs Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs Mech. True, Ma'am.

Mrs Lov. And where is he?

Mrs Mech. I look for him every minute; if you will but step into the drawing-room, I have given him such a picture, that I am sure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs Lov. My dear woman, you are so kind and obliging: but, Mrs Mechlin, how do I look? don't flatter me, do you think my figure will strike him?

Mrs Mech. Or he must be blind.

Mrs

Mrs Lov. You may just hint black don't become me, that I am a little paler of late; the loss of a husband one loves will cause an alteration, you know.

Mrs Mech. True; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs Lov. But things will come round in a trice.

[*Exit Mrs Lovell.*]

Enter Simon.

Sim. Madam, Miss Dolly is dizen'd out, and every thing ready.

Mrs Mech. Let her wait for the commissary here, I will introduce him the instant he is dress'd-

[*Exit Mrs Mechlin.*]

Sim. Miss Dolly, you may come in, your aunt will be here in an instant.

Enter Dolly and Jenny.

Dol. Hush, Simon, hush; to your post.

Sim. I am gone——— [Exit Simon.]

Dol. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality-air?

Jen. As perfectly, Ma'am, as if you had been bred to the business; and for figure, I defy the first of them all. For my part, I think Mr Fungus very well off; when the secret comes out, I don't see what right he has to be angry.

Dol. Oh, when once he is noos'd, let him struggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may trust to your management. I hope, Miss, I shall have the honour to follow your fortunes; there will be no bearing this house when once you have left it.

Dol. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of so useful a second; besides, for mistress and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed! But here comes Mr Fungus; remember distance and dignity.

Dol. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I see what I have to hope. Our young filly seems to be secure of her match: but I may jostle her the wrong side the post; we will have a trial, however: but I must see and find out the brother.

Enter Z. Fungus, and Mrs Mechlin.

Fung. Yes, scarlet is vastly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies; quite proper too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs Mech. Stay where you are till you are announc'd to the lady.—Mr Fungus begs leave to throw himself at your ladyship's feet.

Dol. The mon may dra nigh.

Mrs Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love?

Mrs Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now stand my friend, Mr Gruel. But she has such a deal of dignity, that she dashes me quite.

Mrs Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me in case I shou'd stumble—Madam, or, may it please your Ladyship, when I preponderate the grandeur of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanness of my dingy descent; when I consider that your ancestors, like admiral Anfon, sail'd all round the world in the ark; and that it is a matter of doubt whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition—Ah—a, is not Phaeton next?—

Mrs Mech. Hey!—[*Looking at the paper.*] No, Luna.

Fun. Right,—Ambition—dignity how debas'd, distance how great! it is as if the link shou'd demand an alliance with Luna, or the bushy-bramble court the boughs of the stately Scotch fir; it is as if—What's next?

Mrs Mech. Next—hey!—I have lost the place, I am afraid—Come, come, enough has been said; you have shou'd the sense you entertain of the honour. Upon these occasions, a third person is fittest to cut matters short. Your ladyship hears that—

Dol. Yes, yes, I keen weel enough what the mon wou'd be at. Mrs Mechlin has spear'd like things in your great commendations, Mr Fungus, that I cannot but say I clik'd a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fun.

Fun. Much oblig'd. to Mrs Mechlin, indeed, please your la'ship.——

Dol. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North Briton can boast.

Fun. I know it full well, please your la'ship.

Dol. And that I shall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match.

Fun. I am sorry for that, please your la'ship.

Dol. But after the ceremony, it will be proper to withdraw from town for a short space o' time.

Fun. Please your la'ship, what your la'ship pleases.

Dol. In order to gi' that gossip Scandal just time to tire her tongue.

Fun. True, your la'ship.

Dol. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in choosin' like a consort as you.

Fun. And with me too, please your la'ship.

Dol. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dol. Donna you think the honor will dra' mickle envy upon you.

Fun. Oh, to be sure, please your la'ship. I did not mean that.

Dol. Weel, I say we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As soon as your la'ship pleases; I have a sweet house hard by Reading.

Dol. You ha'? that's right.

Fun. One of the most pleasantest places that can be again.

Dol. Ha' you a good prospect?

Fun. Twenty stage-coaches drive every day by the door, besides carts and gentlemens carriages.

Dol. Ah, that will——

Mrs Mech. Oh, your ladyship will find all things prepar'd: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your la'ship's hand——

Dol. Maister Fungus, you're a little too hasty.

[Exit Dolly.]

Mrs Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you must not expect to be too familiar at first.

Fun.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we shall bring the bedding about?

Mrs Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter sets in.

Fun. Not before?

Enter Young Loveit, hastily.

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr Harpy wou'd call.

Mrs Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the same hands after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome: What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs Mech. No, no, a cit; but monstrously rich. But your lady will wonder——

Fun. Ay, ay; but you'll follow; for I shan't know what to say to her when we are alone.—[*Exit Fungus.*]

Mrs Mech. I will send you, Sir, your spouse in an instant: the gentlewoman is a widow, so you may throw in what raptures you please.

Y. Lov. Never fear. [*Exit Mrs Mechlin.*]——And yet this scene is so new, how to acquit myself—let me recollect—some piece of a play now.—“Vouchsafe, divine perfection!”—No, that won't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But see, the door opens, so I have no time for rehearsal—I have it—“Clasp'd in the folds of love, I'll meet my doom, and act “my”——

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. Hah!

Y. Lov. By all that's monstrous, my mother!

Mrs Lov. That rebel my son, as I live!

Y. Lov. The quotation was quite apropos! had it been a little darker, I might have reviv'd the story of *Oedipus*.

Mrs Lov. So, Sirrah, what makes you from your studies?

Y. Lov. A small hint I receiv'd of your inclinations brought me here, Ma'am, in order to prevent, if possible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs Lov. Your father! how dare you disturb his dear ashes? you know well enough how his dear memory melts

melts me; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break.

T. Lov. Well said, my old matron of Ephesus.

Mrs Lov. That is what you want, you disobedient unnatural monster: but complete, accomplish your cruelty; send me the same road your villainies forc'd your father to take.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Hey-day! What the deuce have we here? our old lady in tears!

Mrs Lov. Disappointed a little; that's all.

Mrs Mech. Pray, Ma'am, what can occasion—

Mrs Lov. Lord bless me, Mrs Mechlin, what a blunder you have made!

Mrs Mech. A blunder! as how?

Mrs Lov. Do you know who you have brought me?

Mrs Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs Lov. My own son! that's all.

Mrs Mech. Your son!

Mrs Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural—

Mrs Mech. Blunder indeed! But who cou'd have thought it? why, by your account, Ma'am, I imagin'd your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter Fungus and Dolly.

Fun. What is the matter? you make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set eyes on her son since the death of his father, and being apprised by me that here she might meet with him, came with a true maternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs Lov. Well said, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—Be comforted, Ma'am; you had better repose on my bed.

Mrs Lov. Any where to get out of his sight.

Mrs Mech. Here, Jenny.

Mrs Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party?

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh—— [Exit coughing.

Mrs Mech. Bear up a little, Ma'am.

Fun. Fie upon you, you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the stericks.

T. Lov. Sir?

Fun. You a man! you are a scandal, a shame to your sect.

Enter Dr Catgut.

Dr Cat. Come, come, Mrs Mechlin, are the couple prepar'd? the fiddles are tun'd, the bows ready rosin'd, and the whole band—Oh, you, Sir, are one party, I reckon; but where is the—Ah, Dolly! what, are you here, my dear?

Dol. Soh!

Fun. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

Dr Cat. As nice and as spruce too! the bridemaids, I warrant: why, you look as blooming, you slut.

Fun. What can this be? Hark ye, Sir.

Dr Cat. Well, Sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr Cat. Rank and condition! what, Dolly?

Fun. Dolly! what a plague possesses the man? this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is lady Scracariffa Mackirkincroft.

Dr Cat. Who!

Fun. Descended from the old, old, old earl of Glendowery.

Dr Cat. What, she? Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly devil; the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Oh, Mrs Mechlin, will you set this matter to rights?

Mrs Mech. How, Dr Catgut!

Fun. The strangest fellow here has danc'd up stairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady; who the plague can he be?

Dr Cat. Oh, apropos, Molly Mechlin; what, is this the man that is to be married? The marriage will never hold good; why, he is more frantic and madder——

Fun.

Fun. Mad! John, fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you scoundrel!

Enter Isaac Fungus and Jenny.

I. Fun. Where's brother? it a'n't over; you be'n't marry'd, I hope?

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the——

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into! Your servant, good Madam; what, this is the person, I warrant; ay, how pretty the puppet is painted! Do you know who she is?

Z. Fun. Who she is? without doubt.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac; only the spawn of that devil incarnate, dress'd out as——

Z. Fun. But hark ye, Isaac, are——don't be in a hurry—are you sure——

Z. Fun. Sure—the girl of the house, abhorring their scandalous project, has freely confessed the whole scheme. Jenny, stand forth, and answer boldly to what I shall ask: Is not this wench the woman's niece of the house?

Jen. I fancy she will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this mistress of your's a most profligate——

Mrs Mech. Come, come, Master Isaac, I will save you the trouble, and cut this matter short in an instant.—Well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And ar'n't you ashamed?

M. Lov. She ashamed! I wou'd have told you, but I cou'd not get you to listen; why she brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fun. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monster! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incense. But hark ye, brother Isaac.

[They retire.]

Dr Cat. Gads my life, what a sweet project I have help'd to destroy! But come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again: thou hast a good pretty voice; I'll teach thee a thrill and a shake, perch thee amongst the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a mistress, which, as the world goes, is a much better station than that of a wife, not the proudest of them all——

Mrs

Mrs Mech. Mistress! No, no, we have not manag'd our matters so badly. Hark ye, Mr Commissary?

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs Mech. Do you propose to consummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty question, indeed!

Mrs Mech. You have no objection then to paying the penalty, the contract here that Mr Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fun. The contract! hey, brother Isaac!

I. Fun. Let me see it.

Mrs Mech. Soft you there, my maker of candles, it is as well where it is: but you need not doubt of its goodness; I promise you, the best advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damn'd fiend! what a harpy!

Mrs Mech. And why so, my good Master Fungus: is it because I have practis'd that trade by retail which you have carried on in the gross? What injury do I do the world? I feed on their follies, 'tis true; and the game, the plunder, is fair: but the fangs of you and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel;
To their candour and justice I make my appeal;
Tho' a poor humble scourge in a national cause,
As I trust I deserve, I demand your applause.

EDGAR

DGAR AND EMMELINE.

IN TWO ACTS.

By DR HAWKESWORTH.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Edgar, son to the earl of Kent, dis- guised as a woman, un- der the name of Elfrida. Leimond, a courtier.	Drury-Loss.	Edinburgh, 1780.	Glasgow, 1782.
	Mr O'Brien.	Mr Cautherleys	Mr Cautherley.
Emmeline, daughter to the earl of Northum- berland, dis- guised as a man, under the name of Gondibert.	Mr King.	Mr Chalmers.	Mr Kelly.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Yates.	Mrs Montague.	Mrs Sparks.
Mrs. Kennedy.	Mast. Hitchcock.	Mrs Mills.
Miss Rogers.	Miss Hitchcock.	Mrs Tannet.

Other Fairies, Servants, &c.

SCENE, *Windfor Castle, and the parts adjacent.*

A C T I.

SCENE, *A dark part of Windfor Forest.*

Enter GROTILLA meeting ELFINA.

Several Fairies enter, moving to light music, and at length forming a ring and dancing.

Enter another Fairy.

RECITATIVE.

NOW no more in dells we sleep;
 Here our revels now we keep:
 By the moon, our silver sun—
 See, our sports are now begun!

VOL. IV.

I

AIR.

A I R.

- Welcome, with the lambent light,
- Welcome, lovely queen of night!
- To thy gentle reign belong
- Love, and mirth, and dance, and song.
- War, and strife, and toil, and care,
- Now their works of wo forbear:
- Night shall now for day atone;
- Give the night to joy alone!

• [*The Fairy mixes with those that*

• *Enter Elfina, an old fairy.*

• *Elf.* Hift—break off!—My charge receive;

• Then renew the sports ye leave.

• *They leave off dancing: the music ceases*

• *Elfina beckons first one, then another, &c*

• *to them separately*

• When the midnight-hour is nigh,

• Duteous to your tasks apply

• You, the miser's haunts be' near,

• Break his rest with causeless fear;

• Creak his doors, his windows shake,

• Till his iron heart shall quake.

• You, as gouty humours flow,

• Pinch the glutton by the toe.

• You, with boding dreams molest

• Proud ambition's anxious breast.

• You, with fancied ghosts, affright

• Atheists in their own despight:

• Bold by day, the bluff'ring spark

• Turns believer in the dark.

• Hence—of vice to work the wo,

• And the weal of virtue, go!—

• [*The Fairies go out at one door; and as*

• *is going out at the other,*

• *Enter Grotilla, another old Fairy.*

Grot. Sister! sister!

Elf. Whence com'st thou?

Grot. I come far.

Elf. What to do? Tell me—

Grot. To confer with you.

Elf. Yonder—

[*Pointing to the*

Grot. What!

Elf. The castle there——

Grot. Well——

Elf. Contains my present care.

Grot. Briefly, then, thy care unfold.

Elf. Mark! it shall be briefly told.

Edgar, Emmeline, you knew.

Grot. Youthful both, and fair and true.

Elf. Thus their destiny was read,

While the sisters spun their thread:

“This youth a maid, this maid a youth must find,

“The best, the fairest, both in form and mind;

“Each, as a friend, must each esteem, admire;

“Yet catch no spark of amorous desire!

“Till this be done, no chance shall bliss bestow;

“When this is done, no chance shall work them wo!”

Grot. This was publish'd at their birth.

Elf. Right; and well 'tis known on earth.

Grot. Blest I wish them——

Elf. So do I.

Grot. Can you help them?——

Elf. Certainly

Grot. Search the island round and round,

None like either can be found.

Elf. Each by each must then be seen;

But not lov'd——

Grot. Hard task, I ween!

Elf. Hard the task; I know it well.

Grot. How perform it?——

Elf. I can tell

Here the king pursues the chase;

All his nobles crowd the place:

Emm'line here a youth appears,

Gondibert the name she bears:

Edgar is a maid in dress,

Call'd Elfrida——

Grot. Now I guess.

Elf. To the youth, the virgin seems,

Like himself, a youth; and deems,

Like herself, the youth a maid;

Neither thus to love betray'd.

Grot. You contriv'd——

Elf. I did——

Grot. But——

Elf. Stay!

Mortal footsteps mark the way.

Vanish—quick! and leave me here:

If conjur'd, I must appear.

[*Exit Grotilla; Elfina retires.*

*Enter Emmeline, disguised in a man's habit as
Gondibert.*

Emm. What a situation am I in?—Is this figure really and truly Emmeline—the beloved and only daughter of great Northumberland? Every thing about me is so like a dream, that I am frighted to think I am awake.——O how weary I am of this dress! If I had known half that I should have suffered in it, all the fairies in the world should not have persuaded me to put it on.—If I resided here in this disguise the month of the king's hunting, I was to break the spell I was born under, and my life was to be happy—so the fairy told me!—Yet the time expires to-morrow, and nothing has happened to me but vexation and disappointment. I must once more see this powerful yet decrepit being, who, though invisible, is always within my call.—This ring, which she gave me, convenes her: if I take it off and touch it thrice, she appears —Once—twice—thrice!

[*Elfina comes forward, and touches her.*

Emm. O fairy! my situation is such as I can bear no longer.

Elf. Patience; for it ends to-morrow.

Emm. To-morrow!—to-morrow is a thousand years.——When the horse has all he can bear, a scather will break his back.

Elf. What's the matter?

Emm. Matter! why, in the first place, I have lived almost a month in a court——

Elf. That your sorrow?

Emm. That my sorrow! Yes—I that have always lived in my father's principality, fair Northumberland, where a noble simplicity of manners showed the heart to be open and undefigaiing, have, by your persuasion and assistance, left it for a place where hypocrisy is avowed by the name of good-breeding; where the most shameful licentiousness is justified as gallantry; dissimulation
and

and perfidy, as address and good management; where self-interest is professed as the first principle of wisdom, and virtue and public spirit derided as extravagance and superstition.

Elf. But your dress was your defence.

Emm. O! it is my dress that exposes me to more than half that I suffer. When one of my own sex is in company, I am comparatively happy; but how unfit for a woman's ear is the conversation of men, when it is not restrained by knowing that a woman is present! I begin to fear that I should not have thought so well even of those men I have been used to converse with, if they had appeared to me as they appear to each other — The friendship and confidence of these lords of the creation have almost robbed me, a weak woman, of my allegiance: I am frightened at the thought of living among them.

Elf. Fear not vices you detest.

Emm. Fear not! but what must I hope? O fairy! if I have implicitly followed your instructions, if I have hidden them in my breast from every friend, and even from good Northumberland my father, let me no longer suffer the anguish of suspense.

Elf. Persevere; believe; confide.

Emm. But I have yet found no object worthy of my love.

Elf. You must find, and know it not.
Such the fates ordain'd thy lot!

Emm. I know the mystery of my fate—that the happiness of my life depends upon my seeing and making a friend of the most beautiful and accomplish'd of men, without one thought of love—Alas!—forgive my doubts, my fear—should you—

Elf. Hold! of foul mistrust beware—To-morrow—

Emm. Well, then, till to-morrow—

Elf. Soft—unhallowed feet are nigh!—Flori-
mond—

Emm. O! that wretch haunts me like my shadow. To rally me for what he calls my virtue, seems to be his supreme delight; he is proud of his own insensibility to what gives me pain: the confusion he throws me into, he considers as a test of his own abilities and accomplish-

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ments; and as vanity is his predominant passion, he is so assiduous to secure the enjoyment of his superiority, that I can scarce escape him one hour in a day.

Elf. He shall work thee wo and weal,
As to-morrow shall reveal.

Emm. But how? where?—dear, dear fairy!—

Elf. Ha, ha, ha! How and where must still perplex ye;

And, in kindness, I must vex ye—Ha, ha, ha!

[*Elfina disappears.*]

Emm. Gone!—Mystery, perplexity, and distress! She sports, too, with my anxiety! I almost wish I had not trusted her: but 'tis too late—Here comes Florimond, and my torment begins.

Enter Florimond, singing.

Flor. Ha! my little Gondibertus! have I found you?—What, all alone? [*Peeping about.*] Egad I was in hopes there had been a wench in the case, and that I might have given thee joy of thy reformation.

Emm. Sir, I chose to be alone. Solitude is sometimes not only useful but pleasant.

Flor. Why, 'tis a fine moon-light evening, indeed—But what the devil—

Emm. I have sufficient subject for meditation, Sir; and I hoped that, as there is a ball at the castle to-night, you would have been better engaged than to watch my privacy.

Flor. What! better engag'd than to raise such a recruit for the *beau monde* as thou art?—Come, come, thou shalt not thus steal away from good company to thyself.

Emm. Sir, upon my word, I am fit company for none but myself at present.

Flor. Psha!—What, always muzzy, with a dismal countenance as long as a taylor's bill! Come, cheer up, boy, I've news for thee.

Emm. For me, Sir?

[*Alarm'd.*]

Flor. Ay, to divert thee, I mean; that's all.

Emm. What, is it any thing uncommon, then?

Flor. No, faith, not very uncommon neither; though, perhaps, thou may'st make a wonder of it.—'Tis only an heiress that's just run away with a young fellow.

Emm.

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Emm. That, indeed, is not so uncommon as might be with'd. But who is she? is she of any fashion?

Flor. Yes, faith, she is of some fashion; Northumberland's fair daughter Emmeline, that's all—

Emm. Oh!—

Flor. What, thy virtue is shock'd at the licentiousness of the age? Ha, ha, ha!—Or art thou a lover of the fair Emmeline's? hey!

Emm. [*Aside.*] What shall I say? My confusion will certainly betray me—'Twas only a sudden pain shot thro' my breast. But what particulars do you hear?

Flor. Why, it seems she got leave of her father to follow him hither; and it is just accidentally discovered, that she left his castle the next day, tho' she has not been here yet.

Emm. Well; but why do you therefore conclude that she's gone off with a man?

Flor. Why, only because the duke of Kent's son, Edgar, disappeared upon the same pretence, just at the same time; and both have been missing ever since.

Emm. And is this sufficient to authorise a positive assertion to the prejudice of a reputation, which hitherto not slander itself has presum'd to stain?

Flor. Ha, ha, ha! Not slander itself has presum'd to stain! Ha, ha, ha! [*Mimicking her.*]

Emm. [*Aside.*] O my heart! What new insult am I doom'd to suffer?—You'll excuse me, Sir, if upon this occasion I take the liberty to tell you, that your mirth is rather ill-tim'd; and—

Flor. Sir—do you know this fair lady, that you are so much dispos'd to become her knight-errant?

Emm. [*Aside.*] I must be cautious, or my zeal may discover me.—Sir, though I should not know her, it is my point of honour never to suffer the reputation of the absent to be wantonly sported away upon mere circumstances and surmise.

Flor. Your point of honour!—why, to be sure, all this is very fine. But I'll tell you a secret, my dear—As unobtain'd as you may think the fair Emmeline's reputation, there is a certain humble servant of your's, that shall be nameless, who has some small reason to think,

think, that a certain piece of brittle ware, which she had the keeping of, may be a little crack'd—or so.

Emm. [*Aside*] A wretch! who never saw me but in this disguise—You are well acquainted with her, then?

Flor. Why—I am——

Emm. And, pray, what kind of woman is she?

Flor. Why, she's a pretty——upon my word, a very pretty wench.

Emm. But is she tall, or short, or brown, or fair?

Flor. You have never seen her, you say?

Emm. No more than I do this moment.

Flor. [*Aside.*] Then I may venture—Why, she is fair tall, and slender; has a fine neck, a very fine neck! her limbs remarkably well-turn'd; her leg and ankle the finest I ever saw——

Emm. [*Distress'd and confounded.*] Oh!

Flor. Ay—I thought I should set you a-longing; but come, she's not to be had at present, it seems; so no more of her.

Emm. I cannot so easily dismiss her as you may imagine; and yet, perhaps, you may mistake the reason.

Flor. Very likely, faith; but what is it?

Emm. Why, I am astonish'd that you make so light of what has happen'd to her; whether you consider it as the loss of a mistress, or whether as a misfortune to a woman you must be suppos'd to have lov'd, and to whom you must have had obligations of the strongest and most tender kind: one of these lights you must see it in.

Flor. Why, my dear, as to that, I am extremely easy about losing her; for between you and I—I cou'd spare her. I must, indeed, confess, that I was very fond of her once; but, 'faith, the obligations were all on her side—'Tis among ourselves.

Emm. [*Aside.*] O, my heart! what a monstrous compound of vanity and lies is this?——How so, pray, Sir?

Flor. Why, I us'd to meet her in her father's park night after night, at the risk of my life; and, i'gad, what with the danger, and what with the fatigue, I grew tir'd of her; and, to tell you the truth, provided her another lover, to make good my retreat. 'Tis among ourselves.

Emm. Well said—and who was that, Sir?

Flor.

Flor. The very same Edgar that she is now run away with. I thought it would be a pretty thing for him; for he is one of your fighting fellows, that is never so happy as when he's in danger—but I'm sorry he has been so indiscreet.

Emm. Pray, Sir—excuse me—I don't pretend to question the truth of what you say; but there are some difficulties in the story that I should be glad to have clear'd up—If you was so much in the lady Emmeline's good graces, and had, as you say, no dislike to her person, how came you not to think of marrying her? Such an alliance, I presume, would not have dishonoured you.—I shall confound him now. [*Aside.*]

Flor. Marrying her! I'gad, she knew a trick worth two o' that I would have married her; and I told her so. "My dear Florimond," says she—her arm was then lying negligently cross my shoulder, thus—and she look'd archly at me, thus—"My dear Florimond," says she, "why should you and I, that have now only the power of making each other happy, suffer a doating old priest to give us the power of making each other miserable? If you were to be my husband, you might cease to be my lover; and then." says she, with a most roguish leer, "perhaps I might be tempted to take another; you would tyrannize, I should rebel; you would enjoy nothing but the hope of breaking my heart, and I should enjoy nothing but the hope of breaking your's."

Emm. [*Aside*] Still, still I draw upon myself more confusion.—But why, then, did she run away with Edgar? That must ruin her schemes both of interest and pleasure.

Flor. Nay, how the devil can I tell that?

[*Emmeline walks apart, confus'd and embarrassed.*]

Flor. What, in your reveries!—Thou art now musing on some virtuous love, like an ever faithful lover tell death—ha, ha, ha!—Come, come; psha, don't be a fool; some kind wench now would cure you—I'gad, what think you of Elfrida?—Come along, we'll call at her apartment: perhaps she's dressing, and we shall be admitted to her toilet. Upon my soul, a fine figure of a woman! a little masculine, that's all; but, take my word

word for it, a delicious morsel for all that!—Hark ye—if you are not sheepish, she'll not be coy: 'tis among our selves.——I tell you, as a friend; faith, I don't love to monopolize—I'll just tickle up her fancy a little, and leave you together. Come——

Emm Pray, Sir——

Flor. I will. faith

Emm. I must insist——

Flor. Nay, nay, come along, come along.

[*Lays hold of her*

Emm. Sir, I must absolutely be excus'd at present.

Flor. Why, what a plague is it now that thou hast taken into thy head?

Emm. Sir, I have an affair that at present requires me to be alone; which I cannot farther explain, than——

Flor. Say no more, say no more. [*aside.*] I'gad, have guess'd it now—A challenge!—Why, there's light enough for two people to cut one another's throat by, to be sure—I'll away——Well, my dear, if I must leave you to the dew and the moonshine, I must; but d'ye hear—'faith, I'll to Elfrida—will you follow me? If you don't stay too long, you'll find an *attendrissimen* that you may be oblig'd to your humble servant for that's all—'tis among ourselves.——Adieu. [*Exit*

Emm. Why, fare thee well, thou—wretch, without a name——What will, what can, become of me! What is it that prompts this fool, whom as I never knew never could provoke, to wrong me thus? is it a sacrifice to his vanity? or is it mere wantonness and sport?—Pary heav'n this fairy don't deceive me!—What shall I do?—I must see her, and take her counsel in this new distress.

[*She takes off her ring, and touches it thrice; but the fairy does not appear.*

Ha!—sure I dream!—Forlorn, deserted!—this perfidious goblin?—Again I touch it; once—and twice—and thrice—and yet she is not here!—O! could—But though I see her not, she may be near me, to hear and punish the complaints which her unkindness forces from me—To whom can I now ease my heart!—O! sacred friendship!—but here I have no friend. Elfrida—ye she indeed, as if by some secret sympathy, claims me

confidence; and my heart tells me, she deserves it—Yes, I will trust her with my secret: she will be a witness for me against this slander, and assist me with her advice. [Exit.

[The scene changes to Edgar's apartment, and discovers him at a toilet, dressing in the character of Elfrida; a woman attending.

Edg. Here, give me the ribbons.—Get you gone—I'll call you when I want you.

Wom. [Aside.] This lady has the strangest humours! [Exit.

Edg. Was ever man in such ridiculous distress? I'm sure I ne'er knew any thing like it since I was Edgar the son of Kent. Here have I had a young tempting girl fiddle-faddling about me these two hours to dress me, forsooth—with an officious handiness so provoking, that no virtue under that of a stock-fish could endure it patiently. Yet an old woman upon these occasions I cannot bear: and, in short, I can no longer bear a young one.—It is my fate, they say, to be miserable if I don't get acquainted with the finest girl in England, without wishing for her; and I was told by a little goblin that started up before me, after it had led me, under the appearance of a Jack o' Lantern, into a wood, that if I could spend the king's hunting-month here in this disguise, all would be right: but how my being in petticoats should make me less likely to love a fine girl, I cannot conceive! A fine girl, indeed, may be less likely to love me; but as to myself, it is high time for me to get into breeches, that I may get out of temptation. Here they flock about me—one sits down just before me, and, without any ceremony, ties her garter—another gets me to adjust her tucker.—I'm the witness of so many pranks, and the confident of so many secrets! Then I have my hours of mortification too: I am tormented by a swarm of profligate fops, who try to debauch every woman they see, with as little concern as they take snuff; wretches who are as destitute of love as they are of virtue, and have as little enjoyment as they have understanding! And here I am obliged to mince, and pish, and sic—and affect to blush—'sdeath, when I'm

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I'm bursting with indignation, and long to knock 'em down—I'll bear it no longer.

[*Elina suddenly appears from under the toilet, and places herself before him.*]

Edg. Ha! What, again!

Elf. Again.

Edg. Art thou my good or evil genius? Tell me.

Elf. As you think me, you shall find me.

Edg. I will think thee, then, my good genius; for I would fain find thee so.

Elf. You must trust me too, or else——

Edg. Trust you!—Look at the figure I make here, and then judge if I have not trusted you.

Elf. But your virtue must be tried.

Edg. Tried!—By what new torments would you try it? Have I not suffered the two worst things in nature, temptation and suspense? Have not I——

Elf. No—you have not persevered: all is lost if you give out.

Edg. Resolve my doubts, then; torment me no longer with suspense: let me be certain of the event, and I will be an anchorite, in spite of this habit and all its works, a month longer.

Elf. Well—Observe me, then, and learn.

Edg. [*eagerly*] What shall I learn?

Elf. Patience, Edgar!—Fare thee well. Ha, ha!

[*A machine rises under her, and carries her away.*]

Edg. Derided, and forsaken!—I doubt this is one of the wanton and mischievous elves that tantalize poor mortals for their own diversion: however, as I have played in the farce so long, I'll not stop in the last scene.——

Enter Woman.

Wom. Ma'am, here's my Lord Trifle has sent his compliments to your la'ship, and begs to know whether he shall have the honour of waiting upon your la'ship to the ball.

Edg. [*recovering his female attitude and accent.*] My compliments, am much oblig'd to his lordship, but am engag'd.

Wom. Yes, Ma'am.

Edg. Hark ye——

1

Wom.

Wom. Ma'am.

Edg. Has Gondibert call'd here this evening?

Wom. No, Ma'am.

Edg. Nor sent?

Wom. No, Ma'am.

[Exit.

Edg. There's a man, now, who might atone for the vices of the whole sex! I am so anxious to recommend myself to him, even in this disguise; and feel such a reluctance to do any thing that may disgust him, even while he thinks me a woman; that when he is present, I labour to make my manner suit with my appearance, I know not how, by a kind of involuntary effort. How strange is the rapidity with which some minds unite!

Enter Woman.

Wom. Ma'am, there's Count Florimond.

Edg. Did not I tell you——

Wom. Yes, Ma'am; and I told him—but he said he knew your la'ship was at home, and that he must see you.

Edg. Must see me!

Wom. Yes, Ma'am; and though I told him your la'ship was a-dressing, yet he would follow me——O Lord, he's the strongest man——He's here, an please your la'ship——

Enter Florimond.

Edg. [*Aside.*] What a farce must I now act! Pray heav'n it has not a tragical catastrophe!

Flor. My dear goddess!

Edg. Lord, how can you be so monstrous rude!——bursting into one's dressing room——and putting one into such hurries——

[*He fumbles at pinning on a breast-knot.*

Flor. That your heart beats in concert with mine——The dear toilet is not more the altar of beauty than of love——Permit me the honour, Ma'am, of assisting to place that envied ornament on your bosom.

Edg. Lord, Sir!—I beg—not for the world—you quite confound me——

Flor. [*pressing.*] My life! my angel!——

[*Catches him hastily round the waist, and endeavours to kiss him; upon which Edgar gives him a smart blow on the ear.*

Edg. Nay, then there is no expedient——

Flor. [*retreating backward.*] Ma'am!——

[*Edgar stamps, and Florimond starts and retreats farther back at the same time.*]

Emmeline, as Gondibert, appears at the door.

Flor. I protest, Ma'am—— [*Frighted.*]

Edg. [*sternly.*] And I protest, Sir——

Flor. Ma'am, I beg——

Edg. And I beg, Sir——

Flor. [*turning, and seeing Gondibert.*] O——
Ma'am, your most humble servant. [*Goh*]

Emm. [*Aside to Flor.*] Sir——I am under very great obligations to you——but I would not have you tie up her fancy any more, upon my account.

Flor. Deuce take you!——I wish you had been near her as I was.

[*Is going, but again stops and adjusts his wig by pocket mirror.*]

Edg. [*to Emmeline, recovering himself, and adjusting his dress.*] Lord, Sir—I'm in such a flurry—I, I, I'm very sorry I should have been provok'd to a thing so unbecoming the delicacy of my sex.

Flor. Upon my soul, so am I too——Sir, your humble servant. [*Ex*]

Emm. You have no reason to apologize for your indignation, Madam; though your blow was somewhat spirited, I must confess.

Edg. I'm in such confusion, Sir—and he has made me such a figure!——to treat me with indecent familiarities!

Emm. Dear Madam, compose yourself, and think more of him. He has not been much better compared to me than he has to you, I'll assure you.

Edg. Lord, Sir, you surprise me!——Pray, what impertinence has he been guilty of to you?

Emm. He has been filling my ears with scandal, Madam; a subject which seems to be equally suitable to his abilities and disposition! He has been telling me that Edgar——

Edg. Who, Sir? [*Hastily.*]

Emm. Edgar, Madam, the son of the earl of Kent.
Ed

Edg. What of him, Sir?—what scandal has he spread of Edgar?—

Emm. [*Aside.*] Ha! so interested!—She loves him, sure.

Edg. Let me conjure you, Sir, if this wretch has said any thing to dishonour Edgar, you would tell it to me.

Emm. [*Aside.*] It must be so—Your very earnestness forbids me, Madam.

Edg. I know I'm mov'd, and you must think it strange.

Emm. [*surpris'd at the masculine tone and manner in which his earnestness involuntarily betrays him.*] Strange, indeed!—

Edg. Perhaps, 'tis stranger still than you can think.

Emm. Your manner, Madam—

Edg. No matter—Forms and modes become trifles too small for notice, when they stand in competition with a friend's good name.

Emm. [*Aside.*] Her love is to distraction—She frights me, and is not to be trusted—

Edg. Let me conjure you—tell me—

Emm. I cannot tell you, Madam.

Edg. Cannot!

Emm. I ought not—Trust me, there are reasons—Let it suffice, that in the story I have heard, a lady's honour is as much concerned as Edgar's; that the slander cannot interest you more than me; that I will do my utmost to make its falsehood so notorious, that it cannot be believ'd; and I intreat that, as you tender your peace, you would as yet inquire no farther—I know myself not proof against your importunity; and therefore you will excuse me, if, having no other way, I save myself by flight. [*Exit.*]

[*Edgar runs out after her, but returns.*]

Edg. Curse on this cumbersome habit! I cannot overtake him. Was ever any thing so vexatious! I have been defam'd by some scandalous falsehood, and I must do my honour justice—I can, at a small expence of dissimulation, get that wretch, Florimond, to repeat to me all that he has told to Gondibert: I will do it—and

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I will as yet lie in ambush under this disguise, to make sure of my blow. [Exit.

Emmeline, as Gondibert, re-enters.

Emm. She's gone!—What can I, or what ought I to do? If I had told her the story, I must have discovered myself to convince her it could not be true: but who knows what a jealous woman might have thought upon finding the very person who is said to have gone off with her lover in so strange a disguise!—Yet she will certainly contrive to hear it from Florimond; and then, good heaven! what will she suffer, if I do not convince her that it is false!—I must, I will trust her—I have no other chance to save her, but by making a discovery, which, if I had really gone off with Edgar, it is certain I should not have made, especially to her. But I must not intrude upon her now: I will plant myself where I may intercept her before she can see Florimond, and trust to generous friendship for the event.

[Exit.

A C T II.

SCENE, *The Terrace at Windsor Castle.*

Enter FLORIMOND, with a Letter.

FLORIMOND.

A YE—she was obliged to be angry, because that fool Gondibert appear'd just in the critical minute at the door—Pox take him!—I might have known it was not natural by her overdoing it—it was, indeed, overdone with a vengeance! But now she's in the panics, lest I should resent it. Now she has something to say—and—if I am disengag'd—she will be glad to meet me upon the terrace. If I should humble her now, and not meet her—but that would be cruel. I will, however, take some state upon me—I will look a little formal; it may save me some trouble in my future advances—Here she comes.

Enter Edgar, still disguis'd as Elfrida.

[Florimond receives him with an air of negligent haughtiness, and makes a formal bow.

Edg. Sir, I hope you will not take any advantage of my weakness—

Elfr.

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Flor. [*turning from her.*] Weakness! pox on you—Your weakness don't lie in your arm, I'm sure o' that.

Edg. [*following.*] Or suppose, Sir, that whatever reason I may have for desiring this meeting—What airs the wretch gives himself! [*Aside.*]—I say, Sir, that you would not suppose—I cannot contain myself.—

[*Aside.*]

Flor. Poor soul! what confusion! I will relax a little of my severity. [*Aside.*]—Madam, I will suppose nothing, but that you have given me another opportunity of hearing your commands.

Edg. I think, Sir, you was telling Gondibert a certain affair between you and Edgar and a lady; and something that, by his manner of telling it, I could not very well understand.

Flor. [*Aside.*] Aye—a very good introduction—a love-story is a most excellent prelude to a love-scene—I perceive we are to adjourn.—Why, Madam, a certain fair lady, call'd Emmeline, has thought fit to make Edgar as happy as any man can be made, except him, Madam, whom you shall please to honour with the same favour.—Upon my soul, she's a fine creature!

Edg. Sir, your compliments really put me so out of countenance—that I shall blush to death—

Flor. Your blushes are so becoming, Madam, that—

Edg. Give me leave, Sir, to intreat that you would at present spare my confusion, and tell me all the particulars of that affair which have come to your knowledge.

Flor. Aye—she wants a luscious description, now. [*Aside.*]—Why, Madam, I presume that Edgar, being first d' with the charms of Emmeline, first gaz'd languishingly upon her; caught her eyes the first time they were casually turn'd upon him; when, to a soft confusion, she hastily turn'd her look downward, and blush'd; he took her hand, first pressing it gently in his own, then raising it to his lips; then, Madam, I presume he might proceed in—

Edg. Sir!—I shall certainly be out of patience, and knock him down. [*Aside.*]—Sir, if you have any de-

desire to oblige me—or have any expectations, Sir, of favours—Not, Sir, that I—

Flor. My dear angel, keep me no longer in suspense; let me know your commands, that I may fulfil the condition of——— [*Pressing.*]

Edg. [*drawing back.*] Hold, Sir—You must then, without farther delay or interruption, give me a direct answer to a few short questions.

Flor. Why, Madam, it shall then be in your own way.

Edg. First then, Sir, are you acquainted with Edgar, the young heir of Kent?

Flor. Why, Madam, to proceed implicitly as you direct, I believe there are few persons who know more of that gentleman than your humble servant.

Edg. [*aside.*] Matchless impudence!—And pray, Sir, what kind of a youth is he?

Flor. [*aside.*] I see by her curiosity she don't know him.—Why, Madam, the youth is a, a, a, rather soft—a green youth, Madam, as we say——

Edg. Sir, these are terms that I do not perfectly comprehend; and therefore I beg you would be more explicit.

Flor. Why then, explicitly, Madam, he is, upon my soul, a shallow fellow—a very shallow fellow, faith——'Tis among ourselves.

Edg. He is?

Flor. He is indeed, Madam——The poor devil has some awkward good-nature, and I have a kindness for him; but between you and I, he'll never be so much a man of honour as I cou'd with him—

Edg. [*forgetting his feminine character, and running up to him.*] How, villain!——

Flor. [*frightened, and drawing back.*] Ma'am!——

Edg. [*aside.*] What have I done! [*He draws himself again into form.*] To think of villainy in people that, by their rank, are set up as examples to others, quite transports me out of myself—Heigh ho!——It has quite overcome me.

[*Affects to be faint, and takes out a smelling bottle.*]

Flor. [*aside.*] What a terrible virago it is!——May I presume, Madam, to lend you my hand?

[*Approaching cautiously.*]
Edg.

Edg. It is over, Sir—I'm so subject to flurries—and my poor nerves are so shattered—I'm extremely oblig'd to you for this character of Edgar—To have been guilty of any thing base!

Flor. Very base, I assure you, Madam.

Edg. Sir!—[*Assuming a fierce masculine air, but instantly correcting himself.*]

Flor. Ma'am! [*Starting back.*]—Fore gad, she's mad!—and upon my soul, in my opinion, damnably mischievous. [*Aside.*]

Edg. Give me leave, Sir—as well as I am able—to ask you what in particular has—but I see company coming—If we walk this way, we shall avoid them.

Flor. [*aside.*] Avoid them!—Heaven forbid!—Perhaps, Madam, another time——

Edg. Sir, I shall die, if my curiosity is not gratified.

Flor. Madam—at present I am——

Edg. Sir, I beg—for my reputation, that we may not be surpris'd together while I am in this disorder.

Flor. By no means, Madam—let us part this moment—If you'll go off one way, I'll go the other.

Edg. O not for the world!—To be seen to part hastily, upon being observed together, would be the subject of eternal scandal—Let me beg the favour of your arm—— [*Lays hold of his arm.*]

Flor. [*crying out.*] Lard Gad, Madam!——

Edg. Sir!

Flor. You'll pince it through——

Edg. Lord, Sir, 'tis my fright—One naturally clasps any thing hard in a fright.

Flor. Madam, you do me honour——

[*Edgar holds his arm; he keeps as far off as he can, and fixes his eyes upon him as they go out.*]

By the heavens! she has the grip of a bum-bailiff. [*Aside.*]

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, the dark Grove.

‘ Enter Elina.

‘ *Elf.* Sister! sister! [*Grotilla suddenly appears.*]

‘ *Grot.* —— Here am I.

‘ *Elf.* Now the fated hour is nigh,

‘ Keep the lovers in your eye.

‘ Each

- Each to each shall soon be known ;
- Each for each was born alone.
- *Grot.* Florimond, the caitiff vile——
- *Elf.* They shall prosper by his guile :
 - (Evil we for good permit)
 - This their friendship's knot shall knit.
 - But the fated hour is nigh——
 - Come, ye elves, whose minds perceive,
 - By secret impulse, what I will ;
 - Come, your sports this moment leave,
 - And what I ordain fulfil.
- [*Many fairies suddenly appear.*
- Now the fated hour is nigh,
- To rites that charm from ill apply.
- Form the circle on the dew,
- [*They form a ring*
- Round, and round, the track renew——
- [*They dance.*
- Mark it thrice, and thrice again——
- Join with me the magic strain.
- S O N G.
- By the bat's nocturnal flight
- O'er the sleeping plants and flow'rs ;
- By the moon's inconstant light,
- Potent spell of midnight-hours——
- By the ring of various dies,
- Circling oft the silver ball ;
- By the genial mists that rise,
- By the virgin-dews that fall——
- By the meteor's gleamy spark,
- Wand'ring o'er the reedy lake ;
- Stars that shoot athwart the dark,
- Lights from polar skies that break——
- By night, and all things that to night pertain——
- Ye rival powers, from adverse arts abstain !
- Intrude not now my purpose to contest ;
- But let the pair that I would bless, be blest.
- *Elf.* Cease, the fated hour is nigh !——
- Cease, and to the castle fly !
- Careful watch the great event,
- Finish'd ere the day be spent.
- [*Fairies and the scene disappear together.*

Ex-

Enter Emmeline, still disguis'd as Gondibert.

Emm. She's gone out, and I have unfortunately missed her—She's certainly gone to Florimond—Ha! yonder they are—Yes, it is certainly so—What violent emotion!—Now they move hastily forward—Now she stops short—her gestures are scarce feminine—Now she recovers herself—Florimond, too, seems to be frighted out of his gallantry, and extremely willing to put an end to the conversation—"Tis over! he leaves her, and she comes this way.—Yes, I will open my whole heart to her; not for my sake now, but her own. Whatever are the first sallies of her surprise and passion, she must at length feel and return my friendship.—Here she comes: I must not accost her too abruptly.

[Retires to a little distance.]

Enter Edgar, still as Elfrida. Seeing Emmeline, he stops short.

Edg. Ha! Gondibert—I know the generous reason, now, of his reserve. In this disguise, what could my interest in Edgar appear to him but love?—and if it had been so, how must I have been hurt by what he had to tell me!—But he is not less interested in the lady—so he said—Sure then he is to Emmeline what he thought Edgar was to me!—Let me, then, repay his generous kindness; let me discover, not only what but who I am, to convince him that the tale is false, which, if true, must destroy his peace. *[Going up to Emmeline.]*—You need not shun me, Sir; I have now nothing to ask that you would wish to conceal; I have only to request, that you would forgive me for having violated your injunction not to satisfy the curiosity you had raised. I am apprised of your kind, your generous motive; and it has inspired my breast with all that it is possible I should feel for you, a grateful and ardent friendship.

Emm. Your love, Madam, I make no doubt, is fixed on a much nobler and more deserving object. Edgar, I presume—

Edg. My connection with Edgar, Sir, is indeed, in some sense, the reason why your merit cannot make an impression, which I am not ashamed to say it might otherwise have done: and yet, Sir, let me confess that

I am not affected by the story of his disappearing Emmeline, as you might reasonably imagine, because I know for certain that it cannot be true.

Emm. [*basily.*] Ha! that it cannot be true—

Edg. I now owe your friendship a discovery, if it is a discovery, which I was prompted by mere rectitude to myself to have made before: I think there is a connection between you and Emmeline, that—

Emm. There is, indeed, a connection, Madam—secret which you convince me it is now in vain to try to hide—

Edg. Let me, then, claim it—But let me first, pledge of that friendship which I hope shall end but our lives, give for your secret mine—

Emm. Do not, then, keep me longer in suspense still the more we talk, the more I am perplex'd.—[*A*] What can her secret be?

Edg. Why, then, in the first place, Sir—I am a man—

Emm. [*aside, with great emotion, which she labours to conceal.*] A man!—Good heav'n! what will be of me?

Edg. And now, let me at once embrace you as a friend—punctilios and forms no longer part us—

[*As Edgar advances eagerly to Emmeline, she turns her face, and appears in great confusion.*]

Edg. [*basily.*] What ails my friend?

Emm. O! you have ruined all my pleasing projects—prevented—but no matter—

Edg. This is amazing! For heaven's sake, what mean?—You was not, sure, enamour'd of my person—

Emm. O! no—You still mistake—

Edg. Then tell me my mistake; for we may now converse on even terms: our hearts may now be open to each other, without the forms and the reserve prescribed in friendships with the foster sex.

Emm. O! still you wander, wider and wider still cannot speak—

Edg. You must—There is a secret which, but your heart was ready to reveal—

Emm. And then I thought it known—but now

Edg. Now my warm heart has claimed you for my friend——

Emm. And now to tell it, is impossible—I cannot tell it—and if I could, you would not find the friendship that you hope——

[*Edgar looks earnestly at her, wondering and embarrassed.*]

[*Aside.*] I sicken at his sight—Oh my heart!

Edg. I'm all perplexity and wonder!—Your colour comes and goes, like a sick girl's—[*She becomes more confused, as he marks her confusion.*]——You tremble!—Heaven's! he faints!—[*He catches her in his arms, and discovers her breast.*] By all my wonder and my joy, a woman!——How lovely her confusion!—O let my bosom warm thee back to life! Look up, and trust the honour of my love: you shall not whisper what you would conceal; nor will I seek to know it. [*She recovers.*]

Emm. O! let me hide me from myself—my sex thus known—in this disguise! Where shall my conscious blushes find a veil?—Who are you? Tell me, that I may hide me from your sight for ever.

Edg. Oh! no—On that condition, let me ne'er be known.

Emm. Yet tell me—trust me——

Edg. Trust thee! Yes, with my life I'd trust thee. Thy friend!—O! know me by a softer name—is Kent's young heir; that Edgar you have heard so falsely and so wantonly tradue'd.

Emm. Still wonders crowd on wonders!

Edg. I dream myself, or this is all enchantment.

Emm. So might you think, indeed, if more you knew me.

Edg. Let me, then, know thee more, whom now I know as the most fair and gentle of thy sex; whom yet I saw and lov'd without desire—my pledge of happiness!—May I be thine!—But yet I rave—thy fate was not like Edgar's——

Emm. Spare me—thy words have pow'r, which yet thou know'st not.

Edg. O! take me from the rack! My thoughts grow wild!—There is, indeed, a maid, whose fate I've heard was such as mine—that Emmeline—O! heav'n,
that

that Emmeline, in whom I thought thy interest, love!
—O! yes, it must, it shall—thou, thou art she!

Emm. Leave me, or I shall die with my confusion—

Edg. Let me support thee, hide thee in my breast,
where thou shalt breathe thy answer in a sigh.—Art
thou not Emmeline, my fated love?

Emm. If Emmeline be thy fated love—I am—

Edg. Still let me clasp thee close, and closer still;
calm all the tumults of thy feeling mind, and soothe thee
into confidence by love.

Emm. No; let me now retire; for in this dress I cannot
bear to see myself or you.

Edg. Yet stay—forgive the violence I do you. My
fame and your's are wantonly traduc'd; 'tis fit that we
do justice to them both, and punish the traducer.

Emm. He is not worth resentment.

Edg. He is for others sakes, though not his own—
I have a thought, would Emmeline but join—

Emm. Tell me, then, quickly.

Edg. Send him a challenge in behalf of Emmeline, as
Gondibert; and meet him, not as Gondibert, but Emmeline:
I will take care to be present, not as Elfrida,
but Edgar: he will then be self-convicted as a liar, by
knowing neither of the persons he has defam'd; and we
may farther punish him as we please.

Emm. Well, I will try at this; but now dismiss me.

[She breaks from his hand, and runs off.]

Edg. Farewel, my love!—How has the hand of
heav'n vouchsafed to guide me through all the mazes of
my fate to bliss! Even my revenge, my justice rather,
upon that wretch, whose very folly is invenom'd, shall be
complete—But a mind so base can never be brave—
Suppose he should not come—He's here.

Enter Florimond. Seeing Edgar, he stops short.

Flor. Gad take me—this damn'd madwoman is certainly
fated to be my death.

*[Edgar advances towards him; he draws back, and
looks frightened.]*

Edg. Sir, I am so shock'd when I reflect upon the im-
decorums that my passions have made me guilty of to
you, and my poor spirits are so hurried, that I really am
not able to make my apology.

Flor.

Flor. Ma'am, I am extremely sorry—and, Ma'am,
—I must absolutely fly from your ladyship's apology—
[*Going.*]

Edg. Sir, I must beg the favour of your ear for a few minutes—I hope, Sir, you will pardon my confusion—I have something to say to you, Sir, that—Let me beg, Sir, that you would come a little nearer—

Flor. [*aside.*] Pox on her—she wants to fasten her damn'd claws upon me again—[*To her.*] Your commands, Madam, always do me honour—And upon my soul, always leave me black and blue. [*Aside.*]

Edg. I have just heard, Sir, something that has flustered me to such a degree—

Flor. [*aside.*] Ay—another fright! she'll certainly lay hold of me—[*Retiring.*] Ma'am—a, a, a, I hope there's no danger threatens your ladyship—

Edg. Not directly me, Sir; nor indeed much danger to you: but I was willing you should be prepar'd—

Flor. Danger—prepared—For heav'n's sake, Madam, what d'ye mean?

Edg. Why, Gondibert, Sir—you'll excuse my freedom—Lard, that I should be so indiscreet—I'm sensible that the interest I take in this affair, may be liable to constructions of such a nature—that—

Flor. Lord, Ma'am, if there is any villainous design against me, I beseech you to let me know it—[*Looking about.*] Perhaps we had better change our ground; some villain may be taking aim at me as I stand.

Edg. You need not be under such apprehensions, Sir; it is a matter of no consequence—It is only that Gondibert is to send you a challenge for the liberty you have taken with lady Emmeline; that's all—

Flor. Oh, if 'tis only an intention of Gondibert to cut my throat, to be sure that's a matter of no consequence—A bloody-minded ruffian! [*Aside.*]

Edg. Why, Sir, to my certain knowledge, Gondibert knows no more of a sword than a girl of eighteen; and has not a grain more courage.

Flor. [*taking courage.*] Why, as to that, Madam—

Edg. As to that, Sir, I am confident it would make no difference to you; but as I know he won't fight, and

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only presumes upon an insolent opinion that count rimond's courage is as questionable as his own——

Flor. [*blustering.*] How, Madam!

Edg. Lard, Sir, if you are so violent; I shall certainly fall into my tremors——I shall certainly want the port of your arm.

Flor. [*aside.*] Mercy upon me! and I shall want very little killing afterwards if you do.

Edg. I say, Sir, I think he should be properly expostulated and I hope you'll act accordingly.

Flor. Madam—excuse me—a coward is my aversion and you may depend upon his being chastised with exemplary severity—But I should be sorry to mistake his character. [*Aside.*]—You know he won't fight?—

Edg. [*a little hastily.*] Sir, if you suspect my valour—

Flor. O Lord, Madam—no, not in the least.

Edg. You'll excuse me, Sir; I am really ashamed of the liberty I have taken——Sir, your humble servant

[*1*]
Flor. Madam, your most obedient——Thank heaven she's gone—It was a lucid interval; but it would have been of much longer continuance. I'm obliged to her though, for her information—indeed am I—Ere I'll make a figure in this business——But, if the challenge is coming, I must be at home to receive it.

[*1*]

Enter several Fairies.

1 Fairy. Come away, come away!

2 Fairy. We have jubilee to-day.

3 Fairy. Wherefore, wherefore?

4 Fairy. Tell me.

5 Fairy. Tell me.

1 Fairy. Ere the ev'ning sheds the dew,

2 Fairy. You shall know; and you, and you;

3 Fairy. What is finish'd?

4 Fairy. What is plann'd?

5 Fairy. Peace—the sisters are at hand.

Enter Elfina and Grotilla, with many Fairies in

travelling characters.

Elf. Now we triumph!—now 'tis past!

Spells are broken, joy shall last!

Let the voice of music rise;
Music, grateful to the skies.

A I R, *with Chorus.*

We triumph, we triumph, with victory blest;
And beauty and truth are of pleasure possess'd.
Let mortals be told, and rejoice in the sound,
"No lovers henceforward by fate shall be bound:"
There's now no conditions of pleasure but two,
Which they all may fulfil—to be tender and true.

Da capo.

'Elf. Now let ev'ry elf and fay

'Dance the laughing hours away:

'Let your nimble feet rebound,

'Lightly from the daisied ground;

'Trip it round, and round, and round.

[A dance.

'Elf. *[stopping suddenly.]* Hift—a mortal foot is nigh;

'None must here remain but I.

[Exeunt all but Elina, who retires to the back of the stage.]

Enter Florimond.

Flor. This is the place, and this is the time—but
I see no signs of my little Gondibertus—Ha! here
comes a *bona roba*, whom I have not the honour to
know—Egad, this affair will turn out with an eclat—
very much to my honour—I'll make the most of it: I'll
let her into my business here, without seeming to see
her.

[Emmeline enters in her own habit, and observes him.

*He affects not to see her; but walks hastily to and
again, often looking on his watch, affecting great
impatience, and speaking as to himself.*

A poltroon! not to meet me upon his own challenge—
I'll make him know what it is to insult a man of ho-
nour—If the wretch had met with me, I would have
given him his life; but now to spare him—a scandal to
mankind! Ha! *[Affects to be surprised at seeing Emmeline.]* Death, interrupted and discovered!—*[Half aside.]*
Madam—I protest—I am confounded—I am afraid that
my natural impetuosity has a, a, a—

Emm. Sir, I am very sorry that I should have intru-

ded upon your privacy; but, perhaps, I have prevented something that would have had worse consequences.

Flor. Madam, I am not at liberty——

Emm. By the few words, Sir, which now involuntarily escaped you, I know that you are waiting here upon an affair of honour—but I intreat——

Flor. Madam, it is impossible—nothing but his life can atone for the insult.

Emm. You will excuse a woman, tho' a stranger, Sir, upon such an occasion: may I intreat to know, Sir, who has had the misfortune to incur the resentment of a gentleman, who seems so little to deserve ill treatment and so able to punish it?

Flor. Madam, you do me honour.—She is making advances already. [*Aside.*]—Why, Madam, as the treatment I have received makes it an act of justice to tell what I should otherwise rather die than discover, I will comply with your request—Hem! A little dirty dependent upon the court, here, Madam, one Gondibert, thought fit to send me a challenge, upon account of something I happened to say concerning a lady, in whose good graces I happen'd to be, and whom a foolish young fellow that I was a friend to has thought fit to run away with; and, Madam, though I have so far treated him like a gentleman as to accept his challenge, he has not come to the place appointed, and it is now half an hour past the time.

Emm. [*looking out.*] Methinks I see somebody at a distance coming this way; perhaps that may be the gentleman——

Flor. [*starting, and looking out as afraid.*] Ah! egad that's certainly he—[*Aside.*] Now, if he should not be a coward at last—Madam, a, a, a, for God's sake retire—for—a, a, a.

Emm. Sir, I believe it will not be necessary; for I'm pretty sure now that the gentleman is a friend of mine——

Flor. A friend of your's, Madam! pray, who is he?

Emm. A gentleman, Sir, who, I am sure, will be extremely glad to be better known to you.

Enter Edgar, in his proper dress.

Emm. [*aside.*] Yes, 'tis he, 'tis Edgar! with what elegance and dignity he looks the man!

Edg.

Edg. [aside.] How soft, how lovely, in her female dress!

Emm. [to Florimond.] Sir, as we are now no longer alone, I may confess that I am not altogether a stranger to your person or your merit.—*[To Edgar.]* Sir, this is Florimond, a gentleman to whom both you and I have some obligations, which I believe he is not at present aware of.

Flor. Upon my word, Madam, you absolutely confound me—this excessive honour—is it possible that I should have been so happy as to confer obligations—Pray, Madam, may I crave the honour of your name?

Edg. Do you not at all recollect that lady, Sir?

Flor. Upon my soul, Sir, I cannot say that I do.

Edg. Who, now, do you think it can possibly be, of all that your polite generosity has oblig'd?

Flor. Let me perish, Sir, if I can tell.

Edg. Why, Sir, that lady is one Emmeline; with whom, as she tells me, you was formerly most intimately acquainted; and whom you lately conversed with, Sir, in disguise, by the name of Gondibert: 'tis among ourselves—What! quite confounded, Sir?

Flor. [recovering himself.] Ha, ha, ha! confounded? Ha, ha, ha! No, no, Sir: you have had your jest, and I have had mine. I knew well enough who I was talking to when I play'd upon the little Gondibertus—Ah! I thought I should make you smart for your frolic—I told Elfrida my whole scheme—

Edg. You told Elfrida your whole scheme—

Emm. But pray, Sir, as you did not know my person in my own dress, how came you to know me in disguise?

Flor. Why, Madam, to confess the truth, I was let into the secret by a friend.—*[Aside.]* Egad, this goes swimmingly—

Edg. Well, Sir; but pray, give me leave to bring you acquainted with a person, who, I'm sure, you are at present totally a stranger to—Pray, who do you think I am?

Flor. [aside.] Heaven knows! but I wish I was fairly out of your clutches—Upon my soul, Sir, I have not the honour to know you, any otherwise than as a gen-

tleman whom I should be extremely proud to confide as my friend.

Edg. Why, Sir, I have the honour to be one Edgar, a very shallow fellow, Sir, that you had some kindness for, because he was awkwardly good natured: I have all had the honour to receive several of your civilities, and the name of Elfrida—'Tis among ourselves.

Flor. Sir, your most humble servant—I have at this time some urgent business—

Edg. So have I, Sir; and therefore you must leave me yet—You may remember, Sir, that you told me your whole scheme to punish Emmeline for her folly, and to mortify her with stories of herself by way of joke.

Flor. Sir, I beseech you—

Edg. Sir, I am extremely sorry for the occasion; but as this lady has not got her fighting cloaths on, you must excuse me if I take her challenge upon myself; and I Sir—[*Draws.*] 'Tis among ourselves.

Emm. What has my thoughtless indiscretion done!

Flor. Ah, dear Sir, now you are too serious—

Emm. This must not be—For heav'n's sake, Edgar, hear me!

Edg. Fear not, my love—Sir, whatever you may think this is but sport to what is to follow—and so, Sir, without more words—

Flor. O Lord, Sir!—I beseech you, Madam—

Emm. For my sake, Edgar—

Edg. Trust me—Draw, Sir, or—

Flor. Sir, I don't desire to do you any harm; I don't upon my soul, Sir.

Edg. Scoundrel, coward, draw!

Emm. Consider, Edgar—

Flor. Ay, do, dear Sir, consider—

Edg. Consider what?

Flor. That I am but a poor, miserable, lying scoundrel, Sir—Indeed, Sir, I am—

Emm. It is better to dismiss him, Edgar, as beneath your resentment.

Flor. So it is, indeed, Sir—a great deal better.

Emm. He is worthy only of contempt.

Flor. It is very true indeed, Sir.

Edg.

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Edg. Art thou not a wretch, without the least principle of truth or honour?

Flor. Yes, Sir.

Edg. Art thou not infamous, as a slanderer and a coward?

Flor. Yes, Sir.

Edg. Have not thy very follies the malignity of vices? and is it not a disgrace to nature, to consider thee as a man?

Flor. Any thing, dear Sir, if you will but spare my life—If you choose any other satisfaction, Sir; if you would be content to kick me into some dark corner, and leave me, I should think myself under infinite obligations to you.

Edg. Hence then—and be thyself thy punishment!

[*Florimond runs off.*]

As Florimond runs off, Elfina comes forward.

Ha!—Fear not, my Emmeline! It is a friendly pow'r, familiar to my sight.

Emm. What! is she known to you?—My friend! my guide!

Edg. And mine! — [Both run and kneel to her.]

Elf. Rise both, both blest! —

Emm. Forgive my diffidence—When my heart accused you, I was overwhelmed with distress!—Your promise to come at my call was not fulfill'd.

Elf. I came not, that I might send you hither: [pointing to Edgar.] Your friendship was the parent of your love.

Edg. I too have need of your forgiveness; pardon my distrust.

Elf. Say no more—your fathers now
Ought to hear your mutual vow;
Both the royal presence grace,
Heroes both of British race!
Go, your duties there present;
I will answer for th' event.
Long may virtue guard your breast!
Joy shall then be long your guest.

[*The Fairy disappears.*]

Edg. She's gone! the kind propitious spirit, that has

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has led us, hoodwink'd, to the happiness which, see!
we had mis'd.

Emm. Let us then haste to follow her last advice;
I can trust her now.

' A Fairy behind the scenes.

' Edgar, Edgar, Edgar?

' Emm. Hark! What voice?

' Edg. Perhaps some other kind and invisible being

' There's music too—— [An overture to a]

' Emm. It comes; another tiny spright——It can
' mean us ill——It beckons you——

RECITATIVE.

' Fairy. Hear me, Edgar; hear, and trust!

' Still be kind, and still be just:

' Truth and fondness that endure,

' Love from jealousy secure.

A I R.

' Take and keep the fated fair,

' Born to give supreme delight;

' Make her ever all thy care,

' And secure thy envied right.

' Clasp her to thy beating breast,

' Round her lock thy faithful arms;

' These will guard her virtue best,

' These will best secure her charms.

' [The Fairy disappears]

Edg. Come then, my fair, whom fate my love ordains

By whom kind heav'n o'er pays my fears and pains!

Chos'n as thou art for graces of the mind,

Ere gold could influence, or desire could blind;

Whose charms, unsought, unknown, are friendship

dow'r;

Whose love on reason founds its lasting pow'r.

O! might each pair thus work what fate intends,

And none be lovers but who first were friends!

EPILOGUE

Written by Mr GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs YATES.

OLD times, old fashions, and the Fairies, gone;
Let us return, good folks, to sixty-one—
To this blest time, ye Fair, of female glory,
When pleasures unforbidden lie before ye!
No sprites to fright you now, no guardian elves;
Your wise directors are—your own dear selves—
And every fair one feels, from old to young,
While these your guides—you never can do wrong.
Weak were the sex of yore—their pleasures few—
How much more wise, more spirited are You?
Would any Lady Jane, or Lady Mary,
Ere they did this or that, consult a Fairy?
Would they permit this saucy pigmy crew,
For each small slip, to pinch them black and blue?
Well may you shudder—for, with all your charms,
Were this the case—good heav'n, what necks and arms!
Thus did they serve our grandames heretofore—
The very thought must make us moderns sore!
Did their poor hearts for cards or dancing beat,
These elves rais'd blisters on their hands and feet:
Tho' Loo the game, and fiddles play'd most sweetly—
They could not squeeze dear Pam, nor foot Moll Peatly.
Were wives with husbands but a little wilful,
Were they at that Game Loo a little skilful;
Did they with pretty fellows laugh or sport—
Wear ruffs too small, or petticoats too short:
Did they, no matter how, disturb their cloaths;
Or, over-litied, add a little rose!
These spiteful Fairies rattled round their beds,
And put strange frightful nonsense in their heads!
Nay, while the husband snor'd and prudish aunt,
Had the fond wife but met the dear gallant—
Tho' lock'd the door, and all as still as night—
Pop thro' the key-hole whips the Fairy sprite,
Trips round the room—"My husband!" Madam cries—
"The devil! where!" the frightened beau replies—
Jumps thro' the window—she calls out in vain—
He, cur'd of love—and cool'd with drenching rain,
Swears—"Dem him if he'll e'er intrigue again!"
These were the tricks of old—But all allow,
No childish fears disturb our fair ones now.—
Ladies, for all this trifling, 'twould be best
To keep a little Fairy in your breast:
Not one that should with modern passions war;
But just to tweak you—when you go too far.

THE

T H E
RIVAL CANDIDATES.
IN TWO ACTS.
By THE REV. HENRY BATE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Edinburgh, 1783.</i>
Byron,	Mr Vernon.	Mr Tannet.
Sir Harry Muff.	Mr Dodd.	Mr La-Math.
General Worry,	Mr Parsons.	Mr Moss.
Spy,	M. Weston.	Mr Johnson.
First Gardener,	Mr Bannister.	
Under Gardener,	Mr Kear.	
	Mr Fawcett.	

W O M E N.

Narcissa,	Mrs Baddely,	Mrs Baddely.
Jenny,	Mrs Wrighten.	Mrs Sparks.

SCENE, *A Country Villa, &c.*

A C T I.

SCENE, *A Hall in General Worry's house, adorned with military trophies; through the folding doors of which, is seen a part of the garden.*

NARCISSA and JENNY.

JENNY.

INDEED, Ma'am, I don't like to go near him :—
besides, what the deuce should he want with me ?

Nar. Oh, some fresh complaints, I'll warrant you :—
but I desire you'd go.

Jen. Lud, Ma'am ! he's such an old suspicious mortal
tha

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that I can do no good with him :—and 'tis a shame to throw away good reasoning and fine sentiment upon so unfeeling a—

Nar. Prithee, don't be trifling now, girl, but go to him, and let us know the worst.

Jen. Well, to oblige you, Ma'am, I'll venture any thing. [Exit Jenny.]

Narcissa alone.

Why was I doom'd to envy the free-born villager?—or what do I derive from fortune or education, but reflections which render my confinement insupportable.—The family-quarrel which separates me from the man I love, and my father's unreasonable suspicions, lie heavy on my spirits :—deny'd even to breathe that pure air, which nature designed as a common blessing to all her creatures !—Surely the time will come when I shall regain my liberty, and my Byron have an opportunity of resuming the tender subject of his passion, so cruelly cut off in its infancy.

A I R I.

Soft Fancy, thou truant to me,
My summons oh quickly obey !
Neglected by Byron and thee,
How heavily passes the day !
Thy charms I've mistaken for Love's,
So artfully dost thou beguile ;
Thy magic enlivens the groves,
When he has forgotten to smile !

Enter Jenny hastily.

Jen. Oh dear, Ma'am !—charming news, Ma'am !

Nar. Thou art a mad girl :—but what is the cause of this transport ?

Jen. Lud, Ma'am ! as I hope to live and breathe, your papa is going down to the borough to vote for his friend Mr Indigo the Nabob, and his nephew Sir Harry Muff, the sweet spark that lines his cloaths with fur in the dog-days—and your lover that is to be—

Nar. My lover that is to be !—But prithee, go on—

Jen. And so, Ma'am, he has given us leave to divert ourselves in the plantations till he returns :—he

scat

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sent Spy in search of you, to tell you of it before he saw me.

Nar. Indeed!

Jen. Yes, indeed and indeed, Ma'am—I wish I could let somebody know of it, that—he might pay us a visit.

Nar. That's impossible, Jenny.—But, soft!—here comes my father's cabinet-counsellor.

Enter Spy.

Nar.—Well, Sir, what's your business?

Spy. Business, Ma'am!—no great matter of business, truly; only his worship ordered me to tell you, that he was going to the election at Tipplewell; and so, if you thought fit, you and Mrs Jenny might recreate yourselves in the pleasure-grounds (as 'tis a fine day) till he returns.

Jen. There's kindness for you, Madam!

Spy. But he charg'd me to tell you, he'd have no looking out of the summer-house window that looks to the high-road;—nor no singing, for fear you should scar the wild ducks that are hatching in the island;—nor no—

Jen.—opening our eyes, I suppose, for fear we should see any thing in the shape of a man!—now your bolt's shot!—Your master's very kind, truly; after depriving us of every enjoyment for three months past, he now sets a dish before us, and generously tells us we must not taste of it.

Spy. Why you know, Mrs Jenny, I would refuse you nothing; not even if you were to take a liking to me myself.

Jen. That would be a fine dish indeed!

Nar. Come, come, no more of this; you may tell your master, I think myself obliged to him, even for this limited indulgence:—what does the fellow stand so like a statue for?

Spy. I only waits to let you in, that's all.

Nar. You may save yourself that trouble, by giving the keys to my maid.

Jen. Come give them to me, Sir—

Spy.—But axing your pardon, Miss Narcissa, that not the case neither; I was ordered to lock the garden doors after you, and carry the keys back to your papa.

No

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Nar. Lock us in! for what?

Jen. Ay, for what, Sir?

Spy. For—for—oh!——only for fear the turkeys should get in and eat up all the strawberries, that's all.

Nor. I understand my father's cruel suspicions: but thou hast more delicacy than thy master; go open the gates. [*Exit Spy.*]

Jen. Now, Ma'am!—if Mr Byron be the gentleman I take him for, he'll find it out some how or other that the old gentleman has left his watch, and be here in the twinkling of an eye.—

Nar. Ah Jenny! 'tis three long weeks—

Jen. So it is, Ma'am, since he blew you the last kiss from the orchard-wall, by moon-light:—I'm sure it almost melted my heart, it was sent up with such a deep sigh.—Poor young gentleman!—I wish I was not of so tender a constitution myself in these cases.

Nar. Heyday!—why, I shall look upon thee as my rival presently:—Well, I must confess, girl, that Byron finds in thee a powerful advocate, and I a faithful confidante: I hope we shall be enabled to reward thy fidelity.

Jen. I should be sufficiently repaid, Ma'am, in seeing you happy.—Dear me! if he would but come now and offer himself a candidate here, we might have a snug little election of our own: he should have my vote; and if I know any thing of eyes, I don't think but you'd immediately return him.

Nar. Faith, I cannot swear that I wou'd not, Jenny.

Jen. Lord, Ma'am, I can easily clamber over the pales if they do lock us in:—let me go then, and see if I can find him any where.

Nar. Heavens, girl, not for the world!—After such an imprudent advance on my part, I need not wonder if a cool indifference should succeed on his: for I have been told, Jenny, that men always set a value upon a conquest, in proportion to the ease or difficulty with which it is obtain'd.—And yet I long to see him!—But come, I am impatient to enjoy once more the beauties of nature: I am going into the drawing-room for my book; you'll find me at one of my favourite seats, where I really long to rest myself. [*Exit Nar.*]

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M

Jen-

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Jenny, *alone*.

Poor young lady!—I wonder she holds it out so long: no sleep o' nights, and her little heart hurry scurry, hurry scurry, all day.—The deuce take the men, say I, for a pack of unfeeling numskulls; they are all alike—wonderfully loving, when locks and bars are between; but if you give 'em a favourable opportunity, not one in ten of them has the brains to make use of it.

A I R II.

Fie! fie! silly man,
Your soft nonsense forego,
No heart you'll trepan
With your sighing—heigho!
For that's not the way a fond damsel to woo.
A truce to your whining,
Your sobbing, and pining:
But press her!
Carefs her!

The business is done, and she'll soon buckle too.

[*Exit Jenny*]

Enter General Worry, discovering Jenny as she goes off—

Gen. There's a baggage for you now! Zounds! if had stole a march upon her a minute sooner, I should have catch'd 'em out!—Damme, if the life I now lead is no more perilous than when I was upon the coast of France, and expected a mine to be sprung upon me every step I advanced.—A fine bouncing girl, scribbling dying songs and love-letters from morning till night, and snivelling day after day for liberty, in order to run away with some scape-grace, who'll cut my throat to get in for my fortune;—and an Abigail, crafty enough to debauch the morals of a Lapland virgin!—"Tis too much for an invalid of sixty-five!—But, upon second thoughts, there can come no great harm on letting them out for a little while:—besides, it will give Narcissa a bloom against I bring Sir Harry home with me.—

[*Enter Spy, whistling, and leading a large mastiff*]

Spy. Here, Dragon! Dragon!

Gen. Well, Spy!—what, have you let 'em out?

Spy. Yes, your honour's worship, I let 'em loose.—It would have done your heart good to see 'em: they jump'd
and

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and frisk'd about, for all the world, like rabbits in a warren.

Gen. But did you double-lock all the gates?

Spy. Yes, your honour: and I've unmuzzled Dragon, and am going to let him loose in the back yard.

Gen. Well, that's right; but suppose they should clamber over the pales, and elope? I've heard of such things in my time!

Spy. So have I; but they must scramble deucedly if they do:—indeed, for the matter of that, Mrs Jenny has a fine stride with her.

Gen. Are you sure now, *Spy*, that you've seen no suspicious kind of body lurking about the grounds this week past.

Spy. Not a soul, indeed, your honour; nor can I track any thing but the foot of farmer Brown's Tom cat, that comes caterwauling after Miss Narcissa's Tabby; and, if I catch him, I fancy I shall stop his rambles.

Gen. Well then, all's well.—But I'm wasting time here—I'll set out.—Nothing should have tempted me from home, but the fear of affronting my old friend Indigo.—Sir Harry will have a fine estate, in a ring-fence close to mine,—he's worth a little powder.—Come, *Spy*, you and Dragon to your posts:—you must have an hawk's eye upon 'em;—and be sure you don't tiddle upon guard:—behave like a soldier to-day, and I'll give you leave to get drunk to-morrow by day-break.

Spy. Thank your honour, I'll take you at your word. [*Going, returns.*] Your worship [*pointing to Dragon*] we are a pair of staunch friends or deadly enemies.

[*Exit with Dragon.*]

Gen.—Now I recollect, there is certainly a conspiracy against me; for I traced a man's foot upon the tulip-bed, a full inch longer than *Spy*'s or any of the gardeners.—If I find her out, I don't know what I shall do in my passion!—perhaps take a second rib, and get a son and heir to disinherit her!

A I R III.

What new curses spring up,
To replenish man's cup,

Tho' heaven in pity has borrowed his wife!

M 2

His

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His daughter will grieve him,
With plots to deceive him :
But mine!—oh, I'll match her
The first time I catch her,

Attempt, a young jade, to embitter my life! [*Enter Narcissa discovered on a garden-seat, reading :—Jenny entering hastily to her with a bird.*]

Jen. La, Ma'am!—I have caught the sweetest lit linnet in the green-house that ever you saw in all your born days:—how its little heart goes pit-a-pat!—or look at it, Ma'am.

Nar. Depriv'd of liberty myself, I cannot behold a pretty captive without emotion.—Prithee, let it go.

Jen. But, perhaps, we may never catch it again, Ma'am; and I want to hang it up as a companion to my little bullfinch.

Nar. The generous find more true delight in restoring their prisoners to freedom, than in all the advantages they derive from their captivity.—Pretty sportive creatures! though we envy them their liberty, never let me be said that we invade the smallest of their little privileges.

[*While the symphony is playing, Jenny releases the bird.*]

A I R IV.

Love unfetter'd is a blessing

Nature's commoners enjoy ;

Source of raptures past expressing,

Which no tyrant laws destroy.

Come, ye songsters! wing around me,

Tell me all ye know of love:

Watchful of your young you've found me;—

—Hark! they carol through the grove,

[*Love unfetter'd, &c. DA CA*]

Jen. Ay, Ma'am!—and I'd be as free as the linnet myself, if I had the fortune that you'll have, and not mew'd up any longer.

Nar. But there's such a thing as reputation, Jenny—and my father never fails to tell me 'tis to be preserved but by prudence and philosophy.

Jen. Philosophy! what the deuce does he mean by that?

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Nar. That I should subdue all my feelings, I suppose^r in compliment to his.

Jen. Is that his philosophy?—Oh never think of it, Ma'am, 'till you can think of nothing else.—I dare swear, your papa never thought any thing about it till he found himself a philosopher against his will.

A I R V.

Since his worship forsooth,
Having lost his sweet tooth,
Forbids you Love's feast
Which no more he can taste,
Be advis'd, and he'll find you a tartar!

Talk of lovers to vex him;
Intrigue to perplex him.—
What! give nature the lie?
By my stars would not I,

Though I dy'd the next moment her martyr.

Nar. There's something of reason in that girl;—or rather, there's something in it, I believe, that flatters my own inclinations.—Be that as it may.—methinks, if Byron were present, I should not hesitate to fly with him any where.

Jen. Lud, Ma'am! if you could but behold yourself this moment, you'd see the charming difference between a despairing damsel and one who loves with spirit:—for my part, I always think it time enough for a woman to despair when you may count her age by her wrinkles.

Nar. Thy pleasantry, girl, generally carries consolation along with it.—Well! though I cannot but sometimes lament his absence, yet I receive comfort from thy counsel, which tells me I shall one day or other see a reverse of fortune.—Oh! how transporting the idea, Jenny!

A I R VI.

Thus the midnight-tempest raging
Strikes the sailor with dismay;
Furious winds and waves engaging,
Banish every hope of day!
But at dawn, their wrath subsiding,
Ocean wears a tranquil face;
Joy, through every current gliding
Calms his bosom into peace.

M 3

Jen.

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Jen. Hush! hush!—As I hope to be married, yonder's that arch-mongrel Spy upon the watch behind the mulberry-tree there;—and now he's coming this way.—What if I could prevail upon him to go down to the election, and make me deputy-turnkey.

Nar. That's impossible; he gets too much by watching us, to give up his post for nothing.

Jen. Do you call love nothing?—Consider what you feel yourself, Madam, and then think of poor Spy's sufferings.—Ha, ha, ha!—He's dying for me; and so if he won't betray every body else to obey me, he shall dangle upon that willow before I give him a single grain of hope.—However, take your book, and go rest yourself in your favourite bower near the fountain, while I try the power of my charms—He must give up his master or me: so don't fear our success.

Nar. Prosper thee, my faithful girl!

[*Exit Nar*

Enter Spy.

Spy. Your servant, Madam Jenny:—'tis a blessed fine day, and you're all alone, I see.—I am with you indeed—but then I'm nobody, Mrs Jenny, unless you'd smile upon me.

Jen. Smile upon you, Mr Spy?—you are nobody indeed!—Can an Englishwoman, and a friend to liberty and the rights of the constitution, smile upon a creature—

Spy. Creature!—am I a creature, Mrs Jenny?—what you make me as bad as Dragon.

Jen. You are worse, Mr Spy: he's a dumb creature and knows no better;—but you can talk, and talk finely Mr Spy.

Spy. Thank you for that, Mrs Jenny:—to be sure, I can talk a little when I am half-cock'd.

Jen. Fie for shame! then, Mr Spy!—Fie for shame—Can a freeborn woman like myself, who would give up my life, nay more—perhaps my honour, for my country—

Spy. That is noble indeed!

Jen.—Shall I smile upon a creature, who, whilst his country's rights are in danger at the election of Tiddlewell, can meanly and ingloriously stay at home to watch the motions of two innocent young ladies, when he should

b

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be huzzaing, drinking, and breaking windows, for liberty and property?—

Spy. Indeed and so I should—How her fine speeches melt a body!

Jen. O fie for shame, Mr Spy!—never ask for my smiles. My smiles, my hand, and my heart, shall be given to a man only, and an Englishman.

Spy. I am both a man and an Englishman:—but what signifies all that, when I have no money in my pocket?—If I had but one piece of silver to prime me with a little, no man should stand firmer by you and his country than little Spy would.

Jen. You shan't want for that then, tho' 'tis the only companion to my silver thimble:—here, Mr Spy.

[Gives him money.]

Spy. Now one little roguish smile, that I'd give a thousand of these for—and the keys are your own.

Jen. Dearest Mr Spy *[curtelying and smiling.]* I thank you!

Spy. Had they been the keys of the strong-beer cellar, you should have had 'em!—Thus I surrender up the garrison for the present, *[giving her the keys.]* And now to protect the laws, liberties, and property of Old England. *[Going, returns.]*—Perhaps, Mrs Jenny, I may return bold enough to intreat another favour,—may I hope?

Jen. A patriot may hope—never to sigh in vain!

Spy. That's noble again!—I'll only step and mount my garters, and return in an instant;—you shall let me out at the back gate, and I'll whisk down to the borough as quick as a nine-pounder.

That—for my master!—By your smiles I'm blest;
Ale! love! and liberty! now fire my breast.

[Exit Spy.]

Jenny, laughing.

Ha, ha, ha! there's a pretty fool now!—If the fate of a kingdom had depended upon it, the gudgeon would have bit just the same. - Let short-sighted politicians say what they will about the power of money, a little well-dissembled love will go farther, take my word for it.

[Exit Jenny.]

SCENE, *A perspective view of the General's park; on an oak-*

oak-tree near the paling of which is the usual inscription of—Men-traps and spring-guns, &c.

Enter Byron.

By this time the old buck is lost in the general uproar of an election—What a lucky dog was I to catch a glimpse of him as he pass'd along the road!—Let him choose whom he pleases—I am happy that I refus'd the solicitations of my friends, as my success would but have increased his resentment.—Give me, kind Fortune, but thy voice in Love's soft election, and I care not who are the representatives of a tumultuous borough!—But here's the blest retreat of my Narcissa.

A I R VII.

How oft through this responsive grove
Has softest Echo told my tale!
Whene'er she caught my notes of love,
She gently bore them down the vale!
The scene renew'd, my wakeful breast
Now joyful beats to love's alarms;
Ye powers who pity the distressed,
Transport me to Narcissa's arms!

———Heyday!—[*discovering the inscription.*]—What new bugbear have we here?—"Men-traps and spring-guns set in these grounds day and night."—Well done, General!—Indeed you plann'd things a little better last war, or we should not have heard so much of your exploits.—Ha, ha, ha!—Such a device might secure your ducks and geese, but not the game I'm in pursuit of, I assure you:—so, with my cousin Ranger—Up I go!—up I go!—[*getting upon the pales.*]—There—now if the Cyprian deity has not taken care to draw all the charges of his spring-guns, and blunt the teeth of his steel-traps, I'm mistaken in my goddess!—So love and fortune go with me. [Jumps over.]

A C T II.

Jenny alone.

I KNEW I could coax him to make a fool of himself, and give me the keys:—Hark! did not I hear something? No; I believe it was only the noise of the cascade:

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cade : but it put my heart into my mouth !—Egad, if Miss Narcissa was to be catch'd sleeping—and the poor thing takes a very sound nap—there would be a fine spot of work ; but I believe there's no great danger, for the gardeners can't be come back from the election yet :—Well, I'll e'en take a run across the green, and see if I can spy him for her.—Pretty creatures, I should like to bring them together !—and for all she's so sly, and looks so demure, my word for it she'll have no objection.—If all women were like me, they'd cut the matter very short ; for my tongue and my heart always go together.

A I R VIII.

Fine ladies may tell us
They hate pretty fellows,
Despise little Cupid—his quiver and dart ;
But when love's only by,
Not a prude will deny,
That man tho' a tyrant's the lord of her heart.
So bewitching a creature !
So noble each feature !
My bosom commands me to take his dear part :
Then how can I conceal
What my eyes will reveal ?—
That he must, and he will be—the lord of my heart.

*Byron discovered in an attitude of surprise, beholding
Narcissa asleep in a jessamine bower.*

Byr. — Surely my eyes deceive me !—or is it some
sleeping Naiad of the neighbouring floods ?—No ; 'tis her !
'tis my Narcissa's heavenly form, harmonious form'd by
nature's matchless hand !

A I R IX.

My bosom's on fire !
It throbs with desire !
Say whither, ye gods, shall I fly ?
Love presses my stay ;
But should I obey,
To my passions a victim I die.

[Going, returns.

——But stay :—thus will I obey the dictates of honour as well as love. Thanks to love and the descriptive author of the Seasons. [Takes a card from his pocket,

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ket, and writes.]—There :—in atonement for the innocent trespass on thy soft repose, I will become thy watchful guardian, and protect thee from the eye of any rude observer.—But soft! my eager transport has disturb'd her :—she wakes—and see, she shrinks even at nature's voice ;—alarm'd, and blushing at the doubtful breeze! I must conceal myself.

[He retires behind a tree.

Narcissa, awaking.

Nar. ———Methought I heard some human voice! These sleepless eyes, wearied with perpetual watchings, betrayed me into slumber :—Sure no eye profane peep'd thro' yon close recess, and in my unguarded moments ———Ah! what's here? *[Seeing the card.]* ———Then I'm undone: *[Comes forward and reads.]*

——— “ Sleep on my fair,

“ Yet unbeheld, save by the sacred eye

“ Of faithful love: I go to guard thy haunt,

“ To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot,

“ And each licentious eye.”

[After a pause of wonder] ———It is—it is my Byron's well-known hand!—Then why these mixt emotions hard to be describ'd? why heaves my labouring breast, except to bid eternal welcome to its long-lov'd lord?—No, my Byron, no! thy virtuous merit shall go no longer unrewarded.—But where is he?—fled?—Assist me then, love's favourite muse, that thus expressing my own feelings, I may alleviate the severity of his.—

[She writes and sings.

A I R X.

Dear youth, my fond heart you have won,

'Tis a truth that it cannot deny;

Love's fetters have made us but one,

Then tell me—ah! why didst thou fly?

My hand shall thy honour repay,

As witness this amorous sigh!

So believe me, when hither you stray,

You need not——

*[Byron discovering himself, sings—*I never will fly

Nar. *[dropping the card.]* Heavens defend me!

Byr. Forgive me, lovely maid, for thus breaking in
upon

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upon those angelic strains:—if I have mistaken their sweet harmonious burden, I am sufficiently punished for my presumption.

Nar. [*beholding him affectionately.*] My faithful Byron!—why should my tongue deny what my looks, sighs, and every action of my life, proclaim?—In the infancy of affection, hypocrisy may be merit; but when love is assured of love, concealment would be folly, and prudery a crime.

A I R XI.

Nar. —Here I plight a maiden's vow!—

Byr. —By thy beauteous self I swear!—

Nar. Thou shalt be my guardian now!

Byr. Thou shalt be my only care!

D U E T.

Here we plight, &c.—

Enter Jenny hastily.

Jen. Oh, stop your piping!—Who the deuce would have thought of seeing you here?—[*To Byron.*]—Your papa, Ma'am, is this moment return'd, and Sir Harry Muff along with him; they'll be in at the gate in the twinkling of an eye.

Nar. Oh we are undone then; what shall we do?

Byr. How, for your sake, shall I avoid them?

Jen. Oh, dear Ma'am, I have it!—run both of you with me into the temple, and I'll bolt you in safe enough. —I've been forced to play at bo-peep with him there a hundred and a hundred times before now myself——In, in, in——

[*Exeunt to the temple.*]

Gen. Worry, and Sir Harry Muff.

Sir Har. No, Sir;—these things never give a moment's uneasiness to a man of the world, *sur mon bon-neur.*

Gen. No?—What the devil, to be kick'd out of your birthright by an impudent young scoundrel, the second son of an obstinate fool of a baronet, and not take fire at it? You'd make a damn'd fine soldier!——

Sir Har. We take fire at nothing, Gen. Worry. You fine gentlemen of the last century wore yourselves out with your gun-powder passions before you were men.—For example, your fire has burnt you to the bone, General,

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ral; so that you are in reality nothing but a collection of tinder and touchwood.

Gen. Damme, you've not a single spark of fire in your whole composition.

Sir Har. Passion of any kind agitates the human frame most horribly; and therefore we of the high *ton* have no passions at all; indeed our lives may be properly styled a kind of agreeable vegetation.

Gen. Agreeable vegetation!—what a devil of a husband will this fellow make? [*Aside.*]

Sir Har. But I'm all agog for a sight of your delicious daughter—they tell me she's a fine *cretur*; is she any thing like Maria?— [*Taking off his hat.*]

Gen. What the devil has he got there?—A picture in his hat instead of a button.

Sir Har. —A-propos, has Narcissa good teeth?

Gen. What the devil will he ask me next? [*Aside.*] I'll answer for't, she'll do your table no discredit, if that's all.—But, zounds—

Sir Har. Table! why, my dear General, we do not understand each other:—Do you seriously imagine, that teeth, in this enlightened age, like your green-handled knives and forks, are mechanically constructed for eating?

Gen. Why, what the devil would you have 'em constructed for?

Sir Har. *Quel sauvage!* [*Aside.*] Why, General, if you must know, the teeth belonging to persons of fashion are tortur'd into beauteous semi-circles, and polish'd thrice a-day for the admiration of the beholders.

Gen. And that's the reason, I suppose, why our fine gentlemen are always upon the broad grin;—a set of slop-dawdle puppies!

Sir Har. Why, do you really think, General, that I should cut so capital a figure in a fashionable grin, if I had delv'd all my days in tough Old English roast beef?

Gen. I tell you, I neither know nor care:—but one thing, I fancy, you'll find, that my daughter will not easily be prevail'd upon to give up her notions of substantial, in compliment to your delicate appetite.

Sir Har. Oh leave that to me, General!—I shall soon make a convert of her; or why have I scaled the lofty Alps,

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Alps, and swept the aromatic vales of blest Italia:—if Narcissa is fortunate enough to have a gusto for poetry and music, I shall make a rapid conquest.

Gen. Damn your music and poetry! for both of you together would turn Worry-Hall into a mad-house.

[*Aside.*

Sir Har. You must know, General, that the muses, all nine, smil'd upon my birth, and Apollo stood god-father to me by proxy.

Gen. Damme, but I believe he's touch'd! [*Aside.*

Sir Har. I have written a song that has made a little noise in the polite world;—and tack'd the crotchets to it myself.

Gen. His crotchets!—Oh he's past recovery.

[*Aside.*

Sir Har. —Nay, the *ſçavoir vivre*, of which I've the honour to be a member, forc'd their annual prize upon me for the composition.—You must know, we were rallied a little upon a certain occasion by the female wits of the *coterie*: so you may guess who was fix'd upon for our literary champion. [*Affectedly.*] You shall have it, though it will lose much of its effect from the pressure of an English atmosphere upon the delicate organs of my pipe.

Gen. [*walking about hastily.*] Mad as a March hare.

A I R XII.

Ladies, in vain

Why entertain

Hopes to bewitch us with love's artful wiles?

Cease to do so,

Since you all know,

We have his patent for dimples and smiles.

Gentler beaux that pow'r possessing,

Yield no more to your alarms;

Each his scented self caressing,

Quite enamour'd with his charms!

Pretty play things, all adieu!

Now dissolve in am'rous sighs;

We a softer clime pursue,

Froze too long beneath your eyes. *Da Capo.*

Gen. —Psha! damn your singing, it may be very
Vol. IV. 1 N fine,

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fine, but I'm not in a humour to relish it:—I'm touch'd to the quick at being flung by the Byrons; and yet you seem to mind it no more than the loss of a match of billiards.

Sir Har. My dear General, be compos'd as I am;—and don't fret yourself in this absurd manner.——

Gen. I won't be compos'd;—damme, but I will fret myself.—Indeed, if I was of your cucumber-like disposition, you might expect to find me as fine a piece of stil life, agreeable vegetation, as yourself; but—no, no, no Sir!—

Sir Har. Now, indeed, General, I mean to resent their treatment; and to show you I'm in earnest, I'll lodge a petition against them, by this light!

Gen. Ay; why there you are right, for your grounds are good enough.—

Sir Har. 'Pon honour, General, you shall be commanding officer for the day.

Gen. If that's the case, I have a plan.—But I'm sc tir'd.—Walk with me into the temple, and I'll tell it to you.—I am sure we shall discover some underhand dealings of this young rascal's at the bottom, and don't doubt of bringing it home to him.—[*Finding the door fast.*] What the devil's the meaning of this?—why, the door's fasten'd within.—[*Listens at the key-hole.*]—Zounds! here are some villains concealed with a design to rob the house; listen, Sir Harry. [*Sir Harry puts his ear to the door.*] Here, Robin, Matthew, Jerry!—why, where the devil are these scoundrels got to?

Sir Har. Why really, General, I do hear a kind of confederate buz.—

[*Enter Robin.*]

Rob. What's your honour's will?

Gen. Here, break open the door directly:—some thieves have hid themselves within-side!——

Rob. Have they, your worship?—then we'll soon have them out.—Come along, my boys. [*Enter Mat. and Jerry.*]—Thieves in our garden! we'll let them know that nobody shall encroach upon our privileges, without a good ducking, however.—

[*They burst open the door with their spades, and discover Byron:—the gardeners laugh.*]

Gen. —Hell and the devil! what have we got here! —You

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—Your servant, Mr Byron:—I give you joy of your election, Sir!—[*Sneeringly.*]—How compos'd the rascal stands!—what, I suppose, you are a stick of agreeable vegetation too?

Sir Har. This is rather too much, damme! upon his return for one borough, to be canvassing for another.—Don't you smoke a petticoat, General?

[*The General looking inquisitively.*]

Byr. Gentlemen, my present situation prevents me from returning your raillery.—

Gen. Fire and smoke! my daughter's maid Jenny!—why, huffy, how dare you be lock'd up with such a rake as this.

Jen. La, Sir! the gentleman only ask'd to see the temple, and so I thought there was no harm in showing it him.

Sir Har. Comingly kind, by all that's plump and lovely!

Gen. How the devil did he get in when the gates were all lock'd?—But 'tis a lie, huffy, he came caterwauling after you. But get about your business, you jade! you shan't stay in my house another minute!—

Byr. Nay then, Sir, I hope it will not offend you, since it can no longer be concealed, if I produce the most delicate testimony of our innocence.—

[*Stepping back, discovers Narcissa.*]

Sir Har. Doubtless, by this light!

Gen. Narcissa! Traitor! deliver up my daughter, whom you have seduced, that I may punish her as she deserves!

Byr. Retire, Narcissa, into the citadel, I beseech you, and I'll defend you to the last.

Nar. I beg you'll give me up, your danger overpowers me.

[*To Byron.*]

Jen. Dear Ma'am, you are only to reward the conqueror; you have nothing to do with the battle:—besides, Mr Muff will take care there shan't be much blood spilt.—

Gen. Matchless impudence!—What! laugh'd at into the bargain!—Seize him, Robin, and drag him to the goal.—Rascals, why don't you obey my orders?

would not fight like a couple of foot-pads, with the muzzle of the pistol in each other's mouth, would you? What the devil ails you now?

Sir Har. Dear General, your ear a moment, [*whispering*] my conscience forbids me.

Gen. Conscience! who the devil ever heard of a man's having conscience, who had no heart!—However, Sir Harry, I see how the land lies.—You need give yourself no further concern about me or my family.—I am determin'd to have a brave man for my son-in law, tho' I cross the ocean for him.

Byr. You need not put yourself to that inconvenience, Sir, when you behold in me one who is ready to lay down his life in defence of your daughter's virtue and your honour.

Gen. Why, tho' my enemy—thou art a fine fellow, I own:—and if I could forget the family-grudge——

Byr. Believe me, Sir, I have lamented in secret the groundless animosity that has so long subsisted between you and my father, so fatal to the early overtures I made the lovely Narcissa.

Gen. Zounds! but when I recollect—to be jockey'd by you out of the borough, and by such underhand means!—

Byr. Why, Sir, you surprise me!—they have chosen that Gentleman, have they not?

[*Pointing to Sir Harry.*]

Gen. No, Sir, they have not.—What, you don't know, I suppose, that they have return'd you?

Byr. Upon my honour, no, Sir:—I have been employ'd upon a much more agreeable service:—and to convince you of it, as they have chosen me, contrary to my wishes, I am ready to resign my seat in favour of any one you shall appoint.

Gen. No, you young dog;—you shan't do that neither:—I am a little cooler than I was:—that piece of still life there has brought me to my senses [*pointing to Sir Harry.*]. I begin now to think, that the unanimous choice of a free body of people is too sacred to be superseded by the will of any individual. Besides, your courage has charm'd me.—Come, you young dog, you may release your prisoners, they shall be upon their parole

role till I pass sentence. [*Byron opens the door of the temple, and brings them a little forward.*] You look mighty cunning, Sir Harry, after losing Tipplewell, and the richest heiress in the county, through your delicate feelings.—Damn such feelings, say I! you'll cut a pretty figure in the modern history of Maccaronism.

Sir. Har. Why, good General, you don't know me yet.—I confess I have lost a pair of pretty toys!—but with respect to your modern satire, a real fine gentleman is infinitely beyond its reach, I assure you:—so I shall laugh at the dinner-hunting tribe.

Gen. Why, where the devil did this fellow spring from?—[*Byron, Jenny, and Narcissa, coming forward.*]—I believe the young rogue deals in magic with both of us—[*To Narcissa.*]—Come hither, girl, don't tremble so:—I begin to think that I've held out too long with Sir Walter—and therefore I don't know how I can show a heartier desire of reconciliation, than by rewarding his son of merit, with my only daughter and fifty thousand pounds.—What says Narcissa?—but I need not ask her.—

Nar. If I may discover my partiality for Mr Byron without offending you, Sir, I should tell you, that I have every reason in the world to admire and esteem him.

Gen. Come hither, then, both of you; as an earnest of my approbation, there—I've joined your hands before the parson; and may neither you nor I live to repent it!

Byr. This, Sir, is so generous, my life will be too short to repay the obligation.

Sir Har. Demme, but I cut a pretty figure here truly!—Chous'd out of my own borough and a fine girl by the son of a fox-hunting baronet;—and laughed at by the old Jew of a father, for endeavouring to accommodate him.—Well, what's to be done?—Why, upon my arrival at Almack's, I must carry it off, for the present, by dint of bronze; tell 'em the girl was damn'd ugly, and that the other borough has lost its charter.

Gen. Come, come, Sir Harry; every man's not born to be a giant-killer—[*ironically.*] If it be not beneath
the

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the dignity of a fine gentleman to rejoice at the success of a worthier man than himself, adjourn with us to the Worry-hall.

Sir Har. Any thing for a frolic, General; for I'm not a tip-top spirits.

Gen. All that now remains, is for me to endeavour to prevail upon Sir Walter to meet us, and consent to make the little rogues happy:—for my own part, I am fully convinced, that the tender affections were never implanted in the human breast to be call'd forth or suppressed by the caprice of an unfeeling parent.

V A U D E V I L L E.

NARCISSA.

Rosy archer, come away!
Give your train a holiday;
Lay your bow and quiver by,
Cease to wound,—and hither hie!

CHORUS.

Rosy archer, &c.

BYRON.

Hither bring the smiling graces,
And the loves with cherub faces;
Bid the valleys laugh and say,
“ Love has made a holiday !”

CHORUS.

Hither bring, &c.

SIR HARRY.

Lips of coral ! eyes so pretty !
Out of luck, foregad, was I :
Tho' I am chous'd, I'll join the ditty ;—
Down, thou little rising sigh.
May love's tender prittle-prattle
Keep the day for ever bright,
And no jealous tittle-tattle
Mar the raptures of the night !

CHORUS.

May Love's tender, &c.

JENNY.

Gentlefolks, if you'll permit me,
I've a word or two to say,
Tho' perhaps it mayn't besit me,
On my lady's wedding-day..

Gran

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Gravest Don with eye of ferrit,
Though he practise all his art,
Cannot break a woman's spirit,
Till he's strength to break her heart.

CHORUS.

Gravest Don, &c.

COLONEL WORRY.

Brother grey-beards, short's my story,
Read your features in this glass ;
Here's a convert now before ye
Metamorphos'd from an ass :—
When a swain of merit woos her,
Make your girl a happy wife ;
Nature bids you not refuse her,
In the crisis of her life.

CHORUS.

When a swain of merit woos her,
Make your girl a happy wife ;
Nature bids you not refuse her,
In the crisis of her life!

EPI.

E P I L O G U E.

Written by the AUTHOR,

And Spoken by Mr WESTON, *entering with a large*

OH, Lud! what authors have we now-a-days?
 A farmer this!—cod, or what you please:
 He swears (tho' we've but just got thro' one sweat-o)
 He'll make us speak an epilogue duetto.—
 What say you, Dragon?—Why's your tail so low?—
 Be not chop-fall'n—they can't damn you, you know;—
 What, dumb, my comrade!—terrible disaster!
 So I must puff for you and for your master?
 Ye Gods, be kind!—No cat-call interference!
 Believe Tom Weston, 'tis his first appearance.—
 You would not think it; but the rogue's so steady,
 He's in the privy-council here already:
 The Prompter gives him merit universal,
 Because—[*whistling*] his whistle calls him to rehearse:
 Besides, he imitates no tragic brother,—
 Who makes him pull down one bill—post another.
 Tho' he's not sleek, and has an hungry eye,
 (A poet's-dog is never fed too high),
 Yet he is sound, Sirs, and in good condition;
 He has no whimsies—no indisposition:
 Where'er in letters large the bills he graces,
 You're sure of seeing him—if you have places;
 He'll top the bills, if to this text he sticks;
 A dog of parts—and have no puppy-tricks.—
 O'zooks, I've lost his business in his praise;
 Oh!—here he's sent to guard his master's bays.
 A dragon once, they say, kept watch and ward,
 Some curious golden fruit from thieves to guard.
 So to protect the poet's fruit from riot,
 Secure some guineas, and a better diet,
 He's sent this dragon, critics!—So be quiet.
 Sharp then's the word, my slender-waisted cousins,
 He'll swallow macaronies by the dozens!
 O'fowling, and snarling,—don't let this dog catch ye,
 At all your tearing-work he'll over-match ye;
 If by ill-humours you our bard wou'd puzzle,
 I've nothing else to do—but slip the muzzle!
 Tho' you're so high, [*to the galleries,*] you too he soon won'd
 Dragon has wings, if I but show him game.
 But shou'd his master's sing-song melt your soul,
 He'll be as soft as—Signor Rosignol:
 Will with harmonious howlings swell each note,
 And bark sweet music—"only from his throat."

T H I

THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE:

O R,

WHAT WE MUST ALL COME TO.

IN TWO ACTS.

By ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

DRAMATIC PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Covent-Garden.</i>	<i>Edinburgh, 17782.</i>	<i>Edinburgh, 1783.</i>
<i>Sir Ch. Racket,</i> Mr Lewis.	Mr Ward.	Mr Ward.
<i>Drugget,</i> Mr Quick.	Mr Hollingsworth.	Mr Johnson.
<i>Lovelace,</i> Mr Booth.	Mr Tannet.	Mr Tannet.
<i>Woodley,</i> Mr Young.	Mr Banks.	Mr Banks.

W O M E N.

<i>Lady Racket,</i>	Mrs Mattocks.	Mrs Bulkley.	Mrs Cornelys.
<i>Mrs Drugget,</i>	Mrs Pitt.	Mrs Charteris.	Mrs Charteris.
<i>Nancy,</i>	Miss Davis.	Mrs Tannet.	Mrs Tannet.
<i>Dimity,</i>	Mrs Green.	Mrs Kniveton.	Mrs Sparks.

A Servant, &c.

A C T I.

Enter WOODLEY and DIMITY.

DIMITY.

P O! po!—no such thing—I tell you, Mr Woodley, you are a mere novice in these affairs.

Wood. Nay, but listen to reason, Mrs Dimity—has not your master, Mr Drugget, invited me down to his untry-seat, in order to give me his daughter Nancy marriage; and with what pretence can he now break off?

Dim. What pretence!—you put a body out of all pa-

patience—But go on your own way, Sir; my ad all lost upon you.

Wood. You do me injustice, Mrs Dimity—you vice has governed my whole conduct—Have fixed an interest in the young lady's heart?

Dim. An interest in a fiddlestick!—you ou have made love to the father and mother—What, think the way to get a wife, at this time of day, speaking fine things to the lady you have a fanc—That was the practice, indeed; but things are now—you must address the old people, Sir, and trouble your head about your mistress—None o letters, and verses, and soft looks, and fine speec
“ Have compassion, thou angelic creature, on a
“ dying”—Psha! stuff! nonsense! all out of f
—Go your ways to the old curmudgeon; humc whims—“ I shall esteem it an honour, Sir, to be
“ to a gentleman of your rank and taste.” “ Up
“ word, he's a pretty young gentleman.”—Then about to the mother: “ Your daughter, Ma'am, very model of you, and I shall adore her fo
“ sake.” “ Here, come hither, Nancy, tal
“ gentleman for better for worse.” “ La, ma
“ can never consent.”—“ I should not have thou
“ your consent—the consent of your relations is en
“ why, how now, huffey!” So away you go to c
the knot is tied, an agreeable honey-moon follow
charm is then dissolv'd; you go to all the clubs
James's Street; your lady goes to the Coterie; a
a little time you both go to the Doctor's Com
and, if faults on both sides prevent a divorce,
quarrel like contrary elements all the rest of your
that's the way of the world now.

Wood. But you know, my dear Dimity, the old have received every mark of attention from me.

Dim. Attention! to be sure you did not fall af their company; but what then?—You should have ed into their characters, play'd with their humou sacrificed to their absurdities.

Wood. But if my temper is too frank—

Dim. Frank, indeed! yes, you have been frank e to ruin yourself—Have not you to do with a ri

shop-keeper, retired from business with an hundred thousand pounds in his pocket, to enjoy the dust of the London road, which he calls living in the country—and yet you must find fault with his situation!—What if he has made a ridiculous gimcrack of his house and gardens; you know his heart is set upon it; and could not you have commended his taste? But you must be too frank! “Those walks and alleys are too regular—those evergreens should not be cut into such fantastic shapes.”—And thus you advise a poor old mechanic, who delights in every thing that’s monstrous, to follow nature—Oh, you’re likely to be a successful lover!

Wood. But why should I not save a father-in-law from being a laughing-stock?

Dim. Make him your father-in-law first.—

Wood. Why, he can’t open his windows for the dust—he stands all day looking through a pane of glass at the carts and stage-coaches as they pass by; and he calls that living in the fresh air, and enjoying his own thoughts.

Dim. And could not you let him go on his own way? You have ruin’d yourself by talking sense to him; and all your nonsense to the daughter won’t make amends for it.—And then the mother; how have you play’d your cards in that quarter?—She wants a tinsel man of fashion for her second daughter.—“Don’t you see (says she) how happy my eldest girl is made by marrying Sir Charles Racket? She has been married three entire weeks, and not so much as one angry word has pass’d between them.—Nancy shall have a man of quality too.”

Wood. And yet I know Sir Charles Racket perfectly well.

Dim. Yes, so do I; and I know he’ll make his lady wretched at last—But what then? You should have humour’d the old folks:—you should have been a talking empty sop to the good old lady, and to the old gentleman an admirer of his taste in gardening. But you have lost him—he is grown fond of this beau Lovelace, who is here in the house with him; the coxcomb ingratiates himself by flattery, and you’re undone by frankness.

Wood. And yet, Dimity, I won't despair.

Dim. And yet you have reason to despair; a million of reasons——To-morrow is fix'd for the wedding-day: Sir Charles and his lady are to be here this very night: they are engag'd, indeed, at a great rout in town; but they take a bed here, notwithstanding.—The family sitting up for them; Mr Drugget will keep you all up the next room there till they arrive—and to-morrow the business is over—and yet you don't despair!—Hush!—hold your tongue; here comes Lovelace.—Step in and I'll devise something, I warrant you. [*Exit Woolley.*] The old folks shall not have their own way—enough to vex a body, to see an old father and mother marrying their daughter as they please, in spite of all we can do. [*Exit*

Enter ' Drugget and' Lovelace.

' Drug. And so you like my house and gardens, M
' Lovelace.

' Love. Oh, perfectly, Sir; they gratify my taste of
' things. One sees villas where nature reigns in a wild
' kind of simplicity; but then they have no appearance
' of art, no art at all.

' Drug. Very true, rightly distinguish'd:——now
' mine is all art; no wild nature here; I did it all my
' self.

' Love. What! had you none of the great proficiency
' in gardening to assist you?

' Drug. Lackaday! no——ha! ha! I understand
' these things—I love my garden. The front of my house
' Mr Lovelace, is not that very pretty?

' Love. Elegant to a degree!

' Drug. Don't you like the sun-dial plac'd just by my
' dining-room windows?

' Love. A perfect beauty!

' Drug. I knew you'd like it—and the motto is so well
' adapted—*Tempus edax et index rerum.* And I know the
' meaning of it—Time eateth and discovereth all things
'—ha! ha! pretty, Mr Lovelace!—I have seen people
' so stare at it as they pass by—ha, ha!

' Love. Why now, I don't believe there's a nobleman
' in the kingdom has such a thing.

' Drug. Oh no—they have got into a false taste.

' bought

'bought that bit of ground the other side of the road—
'and it looks very pretty—I made a duck-pond there;
'for the sake of the prospect.

'*Love.* Charmingly imagin'd!

'*Drug.* My leaden images are well—

'*Love.* They exceed ancient statuary.

'*Drug.* I love to be surpriz'd at the turning of a walk
'with an inanimate figure, that looks you full in the face;
'and can say nothing to you, while one is enjoying one's
'own thoughts—ha, ha!—Mr Lovelace, I'll point
'out a beauty to you—Just by the ha-ha at the end of
'my ground, there is a fine Dutch figure with a scythe
'in his hand and a pipe in his mouth—that's a jewel,
'Mr Lovelace.

'*Love.* That escap'd me: a thousand thanks for point-
'ing it out—I observe you have two very fine yew-trees
'before the house.

'*Drug.* Lackaday, Sir! they look uncouth—I have
'a design about them—I intend—ha, ha, it will be very
'pretty, Mr Lovelace—I intend to have them cut into
'the shape of the two giants at Guildhall—ha, ha!

'*Love.* Exquisite!—why then they won't look like
trees.

'*Drug.* Oh, no, no—not at all—I won't have any
'thing in my garden that looks like what it is—ha, ha

'*Love.* Nobody understands these things like you, Mr
'Drugget.

'*Drug.* Lackaday! 'tis all my delight now—this is
'what I have been working for. I have a great improve-
'ment to make still—I propose to have my evergreens cut
'into fortifications; and then I shall have the Moro
'castle, and the Havanna; and then near it shall be ships
'of myrtle, sailing upon seas of box to attack the town—
'won't that make my place look very rural, Mr Love-
'lace?

'*Love.* Why, you have the most fertile invention, Mr
'Drugget.

'*Drug.* Ha! ha! this is what I have been working
'for. I love my garden—But I must beg your pardon for
'a few moments—I must step and speak with a famous
'nurseryman, who is come to offer me some choice
'things.—Do go and join the company, Mr Love-

‘lace—my daughter Racket and Sir Charles will be here presently—I shan’t go to bed till I see them—Ha, ha—my place is prettily variegated—this is what I have been working for—I find for sheriff to enjoy the things—ha, ha. [Ex

‘Love. Poor Mr Drugget! Mynheer Van Thundertentruik, in his little box at the side of a dike, has much taste and elegance—However, if I can but carry off his daughter, if I can but rob his garden of the flower—why then I shall say, “This is what I have been working for.”

‘Enter Dimity.’

Dim. Do lend us your assistance, Mr Lovelace—you’re a sweet gentleman, and love a good-natur’d action.

Love. Why how now, what’s the matter?

Dim. My master is going to cut the two yew-trees into the shape of two devils, I believe: and my poor mistress is breaking her heart for it.—Do, run and advise him against it—she’s your friend; you know the Sir.

Love. Oh, if that’s all—I’ll make the matter easy directly.

Dim. My mistress will be for ever oblig’d to you; and you’ll marry her daughter in the morning.

Love. Oh, my rhetoric shall dissuade him.

Dim. And, Sir, put him against dealing with the nurseryman; Mrs Drugget hates him.

Love. Does she?

Dim. Mortally.

Love. Say no more, the business is done. [Ex

Dim. If he says one word, old Drugget will never forgive him.—My brain was at its last shift; but if the plot takes—So, here comes our Nancy.

Enter Nancy.

Nan. Well, Dimity, what’s to become of me?

Dim. My stars! what makes you up, Miss?—thought you were gone to bed!

Nan. What should I go to bed for? only to tumble and toss, and fret, and be uneasy—they are going to marry me, and I am frighted out of my wits.

Dim. Why then, you’re the only young lady with

in fifty miles round that would be frighten'd at such a thing.

Nan. Ah! if they would let me choofe for myself.

Dim. Don't you like Mr Lovelace?

Nan. My mama does, but I don't; I don't mind his being a man of fashion, not I.

Dim. And, pray, can you do better than follow the fashion?

Nan. Ah! I know there's a fashion for new bonnets, and a fashion for dressing the hair—but I never heard of a fashion for the heart.

Dim. Why then, my dear, the heart mostly follows the fashion now.

Nan. Does it!—pray, who sets the fashion of the heart?

Dim. All the fine ladies in London, o' my conscience.

Nan. And what's the last new fashion, pray?

Dim. Why, to marry any fop that has a few deceitful agreeable appearances about him; something of a pert phrase, a good operator for the teeth, and tolerable taylor.

Nan. And do they marry without loving?

Dim. Oh! marrying for love has been a great while out of fashion.

Nan. Why, then, I'll wait till that fashion comes up again.

Dim. And then, Mr Lovelace, I reckon—

Nan. Psha! I don't like him; he talks to me as if he was the most miserable man in the world, and the confident thing looks so pleas'd with himself all the while.—I want to marry for love, and not for card-playing—I should not be able to bear the life my sister leads with Sir Charles Racket—and I'll forfeit my new cap if they don't quarrel soon.

Dim. Oh fie! no! they won't quarrel yet a while—A quarrel in three weeks after marriage, would be somewhat of the quickest—By and by, we shall hear of their whims and their humours—Well; but if you don't like Mr Lovelace, what say you to Mr Woodley?

Nan. Ah!—I don't know what to say—but I do love him dearly, Dimity.

S O N G.

- When first the dear youth passing by,
• Disclos'd his fair form to my sight,
- I gaz'd, but I could not tell why;
• My heart it went throb with delight.
- As nearer he drew, those sweet eyes
• Were with their dear meaning so bright,
- I trembled, and, lost in surprise,
• My heart it went throb with delight.
- When his lips their dear accents did try
• The return of my love to excite,
- I feign'd, yet began to guess why
• My heart it went throb with delight.
- We chang'd the stol'n glance, the fond smile,
• Which lovers alone read aright;
- We look'd, and we sigh'd, yet the while
• Our hearts they went throb with delight.
- Consent I soon blush'd, with a sigh,
• My promise I ventur'd to plight;
- Come, Hymen, we then shall know why
• Our hearts they go throb with delight."

Enter Woodley.

Wood. My sweetest angel! I have heard all, and my heart overflows with love and gratitude.

Nan. Ah! but I did not know you was listening. You should not have betray'd me so, Dimity: I shall be angry with you.

Dim. Well, I'll take my chance for that.—Run both into my room, and say all your pretty things to one another there; for here comes the old gentleman—make haste, away.

[*Exeunt Woodley and Nancy*]

Enter Drugget.

Drug. A forward presuming coxcomb!—Dimity do you step to Mrs Drugget, and send her hither.

Dim. Yes, Sir.—It works upon him, I see.

[*Exit*]

Drug. The yew-trees ought not to be cut, because they'll help to keep off the dust, and I am too near the road already!—A sorry ignorant fop!—when I am in so fine a situation, and can see every carriage that goes by—And then to abuse the nurseryman's rarities!—
fines

finer sucking pig in lavender, with sage growing in his belly, was never seen!—And yet he wants me not to have it—But have it I will.—There's a fine tree of knowledge, too, with Adam and Eve in juniper; Eve's nose not quite grown, but 'tis thought in the spring will be very forward—I'll have that too; with the serpent in ground-ivy—two poets in wormwood—I'll have them both. Ay; and there's a Lord-Mayor's feast in honeysuckle; and the whole court of Aldermen in hornbeam: and three modern beaux in jessamine, somewhat stunted: they all shall be in my garden, with the Dragon of Wantley in box—all—all—I'll have 'em all, let my wife and Mr Lovelace say what they will—

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. Did you send for me, lovely?

Drug. The yew-trees shall be cut into the giants of Guildhall, whether you will or not.

Mrs Drug. Sure my own dear will do as he pleases.

Drug. And the pond, tho' you praise the green banks, shall be wall'd round, and I shall have a little fat boy in marble, spouting up water in the middle.

Mrs Drug. My sweet, who hinders you?

Drug. Yes, and I'll buy the nurseryman's whole catalogue—Do you think, after retiring to live all the way here, almost four miles from London, that I won't do as I please in my own garden.

Mrs Drug. My dear, but why are you in such a passion?

Drug. I'll have the lavender-pig, and the Adam and Eve, and the Dragon of Wantley, and all of 'em—and there shan't be a more romantic spot on the London road than mine.

Mrs Drug. I'm sure 'tis as pretty as hands can make it.

Drug. I did it all myself, and I'll do more—And Mr Lovelace shan't have my daughter.

Mrs Drug. No! what's the matter now, Mr Drugget?

Drug. He shall learn better manners than to abuse my house and gardens.—You put him in the head of it; but I'll disappoint ye both—And so you may go and tell Mr Lovelace that the match is quite off.

Mrs

Mrs Drug. I can't comprehend all this, not I I'll tell him so, if you please, my dear—I am ing to give myself pain, if it will give you ple Must I give myself pain?—Don't ask me, pray—I don't like pain.

Drug. I am resolv'd, and it shall be so.

Mrs Drug. Let it be so then. [*Cries.*] Oh cruel man! I shall break my heart if the match is off—if it is not concluded to-morrow, send for an taker, and bury me the next day.

Drug. How! I don't want that neither—

Mrs Drug. Oh! oh!—

Drug. I am your lord and master, my dear, t your executioner—Before George, it must never t that my wife died of too much compliance—Chic my love—and this affair shall be settled as soon Charles and my Lady Racket arrive.

Mrs Drug. You bring me to life again—You my sweet, what an happy couple Sir Charles a lady are—Why should not we make our Na happy?

Enter Dimity.

Dim. Sir Charles and his lady, Ma'am.

Mrs Drug. Oh! charming! I'm transported wi—Where are they? I long to see 'em.

Dim. Well, Sir; the happy couple are arriv'd

Drug. Yes, they do live happy indeed.

Dim. But how long will it last?

Drug. How long! don't forbode any ill, you j don't, I say—It will last during their lives, I ho

Dim. Well, mark the end of it—Sir Cha know, is gay and good-humour'd—but he can't the least contradiction, no, not in the merest trif

Drug. Hold your tongue—hold your tongue.

Dim. Yes, Sir, I have done:—and yet there the composition of Sir Charles a certain humour, like the flying gout, gives no disturbance to the till it settles in the head—When once it fixes mercy on every body about him! but here he con

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My dear Sir, I kiss your hand—but

stand on ceremony? To find you up this late, mortifies me beyond expression.

Drug. 'Tis but once in a way, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My obligations to you are inexpressible; you have given me the most amiable of girls; our tempers accord like unisons in music.

Drug. Ah! that's what makes me happy in my old days; my children and my garden are all my care.

Sir Cha. And my friend Lovelace—he is to have our sister Nancy, I find.

Drug. Why, my wife is so minded.

Sir Cha. Oh, by all means, let her be made happy—A very pretty fellow Lovelace—And as to that Mr—Woodley, I think you call him—he is but a plain, underbred, ill-fashioned sort of a—nobody knows him; he is not one of us—Oh, by all means marry her to one of us.

Drug. I believe it must be so—Would you take any refreshment?

Sir Cha. Nothing in nature—it is time to retire.

Drug. Well, well! good night then, Sir Charles—Ha! here comes my daughter——Good night, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. *Bon repos.*

Drug. [*going out.*] My Lady Rackett, I'm glad to hear how happy you are, I won't detain you now—there's your good-man waiting for you—good night, my girl. [*Exit.*]

Sir Cha. I must humour this old putt, in order to be remember'd in his will.

Enter Lady Rackett.

Lady Rac. O la!—I'm quite fatigu'd—I can hardly move—why don't you help me, you barbarous man?

Sir Cha. There; take my arm—"Was ever thing so pretty made to walk!"

Lady Rac. But I won't be laugh'd at—I don't love you.

Sir Cha. Don't you?

Lady Rac. No. Dear me! this glove! why don't you help me off with my glove! psha!—You aukward thing, let it alone; you an't fit to be about me; I might as well not be married, for any use you are of—reach me.

me a chair—you have no compassion for me—I am glad to sit down—Why do you drag me to routs?—You know I hate e'm.

Sir Cha. Oh! there's no existing, no breathing, unless one does as other people of fashion do.

Lady Rac. But I'm out of humour, I lost all my money.

Sir Cha. How much?

Lady Rac. Three hundred.

Sir Cha. Never fret for that—I don't value three hundred pounds to contribute to your happiness.

Lady Rac. Don't you?—Not value three hundred pounds to please me!

Sir Cha. You know I don't.

Lady Rac. Ah! you fond fool!—But I hate gaming—It almost metamorphoses a woman into a fury.—Do you know that I was frightened at myself several times to night—I had an huge oath at the very tip of my tongue!

Sir Cha. Had ye?

Lady Rac. I caught myself at it—and so I bit my lip—And then I was cram'd up in a corner of the room with such a strange party at a whist-table, looking a black and red spots—did you mind 'em?

Sir Cha. You know I was busy elsewhere.

Lady Rac. There was that strange unaccountable woman Mrs Nightshade—She behav'd so strangely to her husband, a poor, inoffensive, good-natur'd, good sort of a good-for-nothing kind of man.—But she so teiz'd him—“How could you play that card? Ah, you've a head and so has a pin—You're a numskull, you know you are—Ma'am, he has the poorest head in the world, he does not know what he is about; you know you don't—Alfie! I am a sham'd of you!”

Sir Cha. She has serv'd to divert you, I see.

Lady Rac. And then, to crown all—there was my Lady Clackit, who runs on with an eternal volubility of nothing, out of all season, time, and place.—In the very midst of the game she begins,—“Lard, Ma'an I was apprehensive I should not be able to wait on you La'ship—my poor little dog, Pompey—the sweetest thing in the world—a spade led!—there's the knave—I was fetching a walk, Me'm, the other morning in the

Pa

Park—a fine frosty morning it was—I love frosty weather of all things—let me look at the last trick—and so, M'em, little Pompey—and if your La'ship was to see the dear creature pinch'd with the frost, and mincing his steps along the Mall—with his pretty little innocent face—I vow I don't know what to play—And so, M'em, while I was talking to Captain Flimsy—your La'ship knows Captain Flimsy—Nothing but rubbish in my hand—I can't help it—And so, M'em, five odious frights of dogs beset my poor little Pompey—the dear creature has the heart of a lion, but who can resist five at once?—And so Pompey barked for assistance—the hurt he received was upon his chest—the doctor would not advise him to venture out till the wound is heal'd, for fear of an inflammation—Pray, what's trumps?"

Sir Cha. My dear, you'd make a most excellent actress.

Lady Rac. Well, now, let's go to rest—but Sir Charles, how shockingly you play'd that last rubber, when I stood looking over you!

Sir Cha. My love, I play'd the truth of the game.

Lady Rac. No, indeed, my dear, you play'd it wrong.

Sir Cha. Po! nonsense! you don't understand it.

Lady Rac. I beg your pardon, I'm allowed to play better than you.

Sir Cha. All conceit, my dear; I was perfectly right.

Lady Rac. No such thing, Sir Charles, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Po! po! ridiculous! the club was the card against the world.

Lady Rac. Oh! no, no, no; I say it was the diamond.

Sir Cha. Zounds! Madam, I say it was the club.

Lady Rac. What do you fly into such a passion for?

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath and fury, do you think I don't know what I'm about? I tell you once more, the club was the judgment of it.

Lady Rac. May be so—have it your own way.

[Walks about and sings.

Sir Cha. Vexation! you're the strangest woman that ever liv'd; there's no conversing with you—Look'ye
here,

here, my Lady Rackett—'tis the clearest case in the world, I'll make it plain in a moment.

Lady Rac. Well, Sir! ha! ha! ha!

[With a sneering laugh]

Sir Cha. I had four cards left—a trump has led—they were fix—no, no, no, they were seven, and w nine—then you know—the beauty of the play wa to—

Lady Rac. Well, now, 'tis amazing to me, that you can't see it—Give me leave, Sir Charles—your left-hand adversary had led his last trump—and he had before finess'd the club and rough'd the diamond—now if you had put on your diamond—

Sir Cha. Zoons! Madam, but we play'd for the odd trick.

Lady Rac. And sure the play for the odd trick—

Sir Cha. Death and fury! can't you hear me?

Lady Rac. Go on, Sir.

Sir Cha. Zoons! hear me, I say.—Will you hear me?

Lady Rac. I never heard the like in my life.

[Hums a tune, and walks about fretfully]

Sir Cha. Why then you are enough to provoke the patience of a Stoick.—*[Looks at her, and she walks about and laughs uneasily.]* Very well, Madam!—You know no more of the game than your father's leaden Hercules on the top of the house—You know no more of what than he does of gardening.

Lady Rac. Ha! ha! ha!

[Takes out a glass and settles her hair]

Sir Cha. You're a vile woman, and I'll not sleep another night under one roof with you.

Lady Rac. As you please, Sir.

Sir Cha. Madam, it shall be as I please—I'll ord my chariot this moment—*[Going.]* I know how t cards should be play'd as well as any man in Englan that let me tell you—*[Going.]*—And when your fami were standing behind counters, measuring out tape, a bartering for Whitechapel needles, my ancestors, my a cestors, Madam, were squandering away whole esta at cards; whole estates, my Lady Rackett—*[She hums tune, and he looks at her.]*—Why then, by all that's de

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me, I'll never exchange another word with you, good, or indifferent—Look'ye, my Lady Racket—thus stood—the trump being led, it was then my business—

Lady Rac. To play the diamond, to be sure.

Sir Cha. Damn it, I have done with you for ever; and you may tell your father. *[Exit.]*

Lady Rac. What a passion the gentleman's in! ha! *[laughs in a peevish manner.]* I promise him, I'll give up my judgment.

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My Lady Racket, look ye, Ma'am—once more, out of pure good-nature—

Lady Rac. Sir, I am convinc'd of your good-nature.

Sir Cha. That, and that only, prevails with me to tell you, the club was the play.

Lady Rac. Well, be it so—I have no objection.

Sir Cha. 'Tis the clearest point in the world—we were nine, and—

Lady Rac. And for that very reason—You know the club was the best in the house.

Sir Cha. There's no such thing as talking to you—you're a base woman—I'll part from you for ever; you may live here with your father, and admire his fantastical regreens till you grow as fantastical yourself—I'll set off for London this instant—*[Stops at the door.]* The club was not the best in the house.

Lady Rac. How calm you are! Well!—I'll go to bed; will you come?—You had better—Come on—you shall come to bed—Not come to bed when I call you! Poor Sir Charles!

[Looks and laughs, then exits.]

Sir Cha. That ease is provoking. *[Crosses to the opposite door where she went out.]*—I tell you the diamond was not the play; and I here take my final leave of you—*[Walks back as fast as he can.]* I am resolv'd on it; and I know the club was not the best in the use. *[Exit.]*

A C T II.

Enter DIMITY.

DIMITY.

HA, ha, ha! Oh, Heavens! I shall expire of laughing—This is the modish couple tho so happy!—such a quarrel as they have had—the house is in uproar—ha, ha! a rare proof of the nefs they enjoy in high life. I shall never hear of fashion mentioned again, but I shall be ready to a fit of laughter—Ho! ho! ho! this is three wter marriage, I think.

Enter Drugget.

Drug. Hey! how! what's the matter, Dimit What am I call'd down stairs for?

Dim. Why, there's two people of fashion—
[*Stifles*

Drug. Why, you saucy minx!—Explain timent.

Dim. The fond couple have been together by t this half hour—are you satisfied now?

Drug. Ay!—What, have they quarrell'd?—w it about?

Dim. Something above my comprehension, and too, I believe—People in high life understand th forms best—And here comes one that can unrid whole affair.

Enter Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. [*to the people within.*] I say, let the be put to this moment—So, Mr Drugget.

Drug. Sir Charles, here's a terrible bustle—I expect this—what can be the matter?

Sir Cha. I have been us'd by your daughter base, so contemptuous a manner, that I am deter not to stay in this house to-night.

Drug. This is a thunderbolt to me! after seei elegantly and fashionably you liv'd together, to fi all sun-shine vanish'd—Do, Sir Charles, let me h breach, if possible.

Sir Cha. Sir, 'tis impossible—I'll not live with her a day longer.

Drug. Nay, nay, don't be over hasty—let me intreat you, go to bed and sleep upon it—in the morning, when you're cool——

Sir Cha. Oh, Sir, I am very cool, I assure——ha ! ha !—it is not in her power, Sir, to—a—a—to disturb the serenity of my temper—Don't imagine that I'm in a passion—I'm not so easily ruffled as you may imagine—But quietly and deliberately I can repay the injuries done me by a false, ungrateful, deceitful wife.

Drug. The injuries done you by a false, ungrateful wife ! My daughter, I hope——

Sir Cha. Her character is now fully known to me—she's a vile woman ! That's all I have to say, Sir.

Drug. Hey ! how !—a vile woman !—What has she done—I hope she is not capable——

Sir Cha. I shall enter into no detail, Mr Drugget ; the time and circumstances won't allow it at present—But depend upon it, I have done with her—a low, unpolish'd, uneducated, false, imposing—See if the horses are put to.

Drug. Mercy on me, in my old days to hear this !

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. Deliver me ! I am all over in such a tremble—Sir Charles, I shall break my heart if there's any thing amiss.

Sir Cha. Madam, I am very sorry, for your sake—but there is no possibility of living with her.

Mrs Drug. My poor dear girl ! What can she have done ?

Sir Cha. What all her sex can do, the very spirit of them all.

Drug. Ay ! ay ! ay !—She's bringing foul disgrace upon us—This comes of her marrying a man of fashion.

Sir Cha. Fashion, Sir !—that should have instructed her better—she might have been sensible of her happiness—Whatever you may think of the fortune you gave her, my rank in life claims respect—claims obedience, attention, truth, and love, from one raised in the world, as she has been, by an alliance with me.

Drug. And let me tell you, however you may estimate your quality, my daughter is dear to me.

Sir Cha. And, Sir, my character is dear to me.

Drug. Yet you must give me leave to tell you—

Sir Cha. I won't hear a word.

Drug. Not in behalf of my own daughter?

Sir Cha. Nothing can excuse her—'tis to no purpose—she has married above her; and if that circumstance makes the lady forget herself, she at least shall see that can and will support my own dignity.

Drug. But, Sir, I have a right to ask——

Mrs Drug. Patience, my dear; be a little calm.

Drug. Mrs Drugget, do you have patience; I need and will inquire.

Mrs Drug. Don't be so hasty, my love: have full respect for Sir Charles's rank; don't be violent with man of his fashion.

Drug. Hold your tongue, woman, I say—you're a person of fashion at least—My daughter was ever good girl.

Sir Cha. I have found her out.

Drug. Oh, then it is all over—and it does not signify arguing about it.

Mrs Drug. That ever I should live to see this how the unfortunate girl could take such wickedness to her head, I can't imagine—I'll go and speak to the happy creature this moment. [E]

Sir Cha. She stands detected now—detected in truest colours.

Drug. Well, grievous as it may be, let me hear circumstances of this unhappy business.

Sir Cha. Mr Drugget, I have not leisure now—her behaviour has been so exasperating, that I shall make the best of my way to town—My mind is fixed—I see me no more; and so, your servant, Sir. [E]

Drug. What a calamity has here befallen us! a good girl, and so well dispos'd, till the evil communication of high life, and fashionable vices, turn'd her to folly.

Enter Lovelace.

Love. Joy! joy! Mr Drugget, I give you joy.

Drug. Don't insult me, Sir!—I desire you won't.

Love. Insult you, Sir!—is there any thing in

ing, my dear Sir, if I take the liberty to congratulate you on—

Drug. There! there!—the manners of high life for you—he thinks there's nothing in all this—the ill behaviour of a wife he thinks an ornament to her character—Mr Lovelace, you shall have no daughter of mine.

Love. My dear Sir, never bear malice—I have reconsidered the thing; and curse catch me, if I don't think your notion of the Guildhall giants and the court of Aldermen in hornbeam—

Drug. Well! well! well! there may be people at the court-end of the town in hornbeam too.

Love. Yes, faith, so there may—and I believe I could recommend you to a tolerable collection—however, with your daughter I am ready to venture.

Drug. But I am not ready—I'll not venture my girl with you—no more daughters of mine shall have their minds deprav'd by polite vices.

Enter Woodley.

'Mr Woodley—you shall have Nancy to your wife, as I promis'd you—take her to-morrow morning.

Wood. Sir, I have not words to express—

Love. What the devil is the matter with the old haberdasher now?

Drug. And hark ye, Mr Woodley—I'll make you a present for your garden of a coronation-dinner in greens, with the champion riding on horseback, and the sword will be full-grown before April next.

Wood. I shall receive it, Sir, as your favour.

Drug. Ay, ay! I see my error in wanting an alliance with great folks—I had rather have you, Mr Woodley, for my son-in-law, than any courtly fop of 'em all. Is this man gone?—Is Sir Charles Rackett gone?

Wood. Not yet;—he makes a bawling yonder for his horses—I'll step and call him to you. [*Exit*]

Drug. I am out of all patience—I am out of my senses—I must see him once more—Mr Lovelace, neither you nor any person of fashion shall ruin another daughter of mine. [*Exit*]

Love. Droll this!—damn'd droll! and every syllable.

table of it Arabic to me—The queer old putt is whimsical in his notions of life as of gardening. This be the case—I'll brush, and leave him to his excursions. [Exit]

Enter Lady Rackett, Mrs Drugget, and Dimity.

Lady Rac. A cruel, barbarous man! to quarrel in this unaccountable manner; to alarm the whole household and expose me and himself too.

Mrs Drug. Oh, child! I never thought it would have come to this—Your shame won't end here! it will be a cover St James's parish by to-morrow morning.

Lady Rac. Well, if it must be so, there's one comfort the story will tell more to his disgrace than mine.

Dim. As I'm a sinner, and so it will, Madam. He deserves what he has met with, I think.

Mrs Drug. Dimity, don't you encourage her—your shock me to hear you speak so—I did not think you had been so harden'd.

Lady Rac. Harden'd do you call it?—I have liv'd in the world to very little purpose if such trifles as these are to disturb my rest.

Mrs Drug. You wicked girl!—Do you call it a trifle to be guilty of falsehood to your husband's bed?

Lady Rac. How!—

[Turns short and stares at her]

Dim. That! that's a mere trifle indeed—I have been in as good places as any body, and not a creature minds it now, I'm sure.

Mrs Drug. My Lady Rackett, my Lady Rackett! I never could think to see you come to this deplorable shame.

Lady Rac. Surely the base man has not been capable of laying any thing of that sort to my charge.
[Aside.]—All this is unaccountable to me—ha! ha!—'tis ridiculous beyond measure.

Dim. That's right, Madam:—laugh at it—your serv'd him right.

Mrs Drug. Charlotte! Charlotte! I'm astonish'd at your wickedness.

Lady Rac. Well, I protest and vow I don't comprehend all this.—Has Sir Charles accus'd me of any impropriety in my conduct?

Mrs Drug. Oh! too true, he has—He has found you out; and you have behav'd basely, he says.

Lady Rac. Madam.

Mrs Drug. You have fallen into frailty, like many others of your sex, he says; and he is resolv'd to come to a separation directly.

Lady Rac. Why then, if he is so base a wretch as to dishonour me in that manner, his heart shall ache before I live with him again.

Dim. Hold to that, Ma'am; and let his head ache in to the bargain.

Mrs Drug. Your poor father heard it as well as me.

Lady Rac. Then let your doors be opened for him this very moment—let him return to London—If he does not, I'll lock myself up; and the false one shan't approach me, tho' he beg on his knees at my very door—a base injurious man! [Exit.

Mrs Drug. Dimity, do, let us follow, and hear what she has to say for herself. [Exit.

Dim. She has excuse enough, I warrant her—What a noise is here indeed!—I have liv'd in polite families; where there was no such bustle made about nothing. [Exit.

Enter Sir Charles and Drugget.

Sir Cha. 'Tis in vain, Sir; my resolution is taken—

Drug. Well, but consider, I am her father—in-
dulge me only till we hear what the girl has to say in her defence.

Sir Cha. She can have nothing to say—no excuse can palliate such behaviour.

Drug. Don't be too positive—there may be some mistake.

Sir Cha. No mistake—did not I see her, hear her myself?

Drug. Lackaday! then I am an unfortunate man!

Sir Cha. She will be unfortunate too—with all my heart—she may thank herself—she might have been happy, had she been so dispos'd.

Drug. Why, truly, I think she might.

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. I wish you'd moderate your anger a little
—and

—and let us talk over this affair with temper—my daughter denies every tittle of your charge.

Sir Cha. Denies it! denies it!

Mrs Drug. She does indeed.

Sir Cha. And that aggravates her fault.

Mrs Drug. She vows you never found her out in any thing that was wrong.

Sir Cha. So! she does not allow it to be wrong then? —Madam, I tell you again, I know her thoroughly; I say, I have found her out, and I am now acquainted with her character.

Mrs Drug. Then you are in opposite stories—she swears, my dear Mr Drugget, the poor girl swears she never was guilty of the smallest infidelity to her husband in her born days.

Sir Cha. And what then?—what if she does say so?

Mrs Drug. And if she says truly, it is hard her character should be blown upon without just cause.

Sir Cha. And is she therefore to behave ill in other respects? I never charg'd her with infidelity to me, Madam—There I allow her innocent.

Drug. And did not you charge her then?

Sir Cha. No, Sir, I never dreamt of such a thing.

Drug. Why then, if she's innocent, let me tell you, you're a scandalous person.

Mrs Drug. Frithac, my dear—

Drug. Be quiet—tho' he is a man of quality, I will tell him of it—did not I fine for sheriff?—Yes, you are a scandalous person to defame an honest man's daughter.

Sir Cha. What have you taken into your head now?

Drug. You charg'd her with falsehood to your bed.

Sir Cha. No—never—never.

Drug. But I say you did—you call'd yourself a cuckold—did not he, wife?

Mrs Drug. Yes, lovely, I'm witness.

Sir Cha. Absurd! I said no such thing.

Drug. But I aver you did.

Mrs Drug. You did, indeed, Sir.

Sir Cha. But I tell you no—positively no.

Drug. and *Mrs Drug.* And I say yes, positively.
yes—

Sir

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath, this is all madness—

Drug. You said she follow'd the ways of most of her sex.

Sir Cha. I said so—and what then?

Drug. There, he owns it—owns that he call'd himself a cuckold—and without rhyme or reason into the bargain.

Sir Cha. I never own'd any such thing.

Drug. You own'd it even now—now—now—now.

Enter Dimity, in a fit of laughing.

Dim. What do you think it was all about—ha, ha! the whole secret is come out, ha, ha!—It was all about a game of cards—ha, ha!—

Drug. A game of cards!

Dim. [*laughing.*] It was all about a club and a diamond. [*Runs out laughing.*]

Drug. And was that all, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And enough too, Sir—

Drug. And was that what you found her out in?

Sir Cha. I can't bear to be contradicted when I'm clear that I'm in the right.

Drug. I never heard such a heap of nonsense in all my life—Woodley shall marry Nancy.

Mrs Drug. Don't be in a hurry, my love, this will all be made up.

Drug. Why does not he go and beg her pardon, then?

Sir Cha. I beg her pardon! I won't debase myself to any of you—I shan't forgive her, you may rest assur'd.

[*Exit.*]

Drug. Now there—there's a pretty fellow for you!

Mrs Drug. I'll step and prevail on my Lady Rackett to speak to him—then all will be well. [*Exit.*]

Drug. A ridiculous fop! I'm glad 'tis no worse, however.

Enter Nancy.

So Nancy—you seem in confusion, my girl!

Nan. How can one help it?—With all this noise in the house, and you're going to marry me as ill as my sister—I hate Mr Lovelace.

Drug. Why so, child?

Nan. I know these people of quality despise us all
out

out of pride, and would be glad to marry us out of varice.

Drug. The girl's right.

Nan. They marry one woman, live with another, love only themselves.

Drug. And then quarrel about a card.

Nan. I don't want to be a gay lady—I want to be happy.

Drug. And so you shall—don't fright yourself, come—step to your sister, bid her make herself easy—and comfort her, go.

Nan. Yes, Sir. [1]

Drug. I'll step and settle the matter with Mr. W. I'll stay here this moment. [1]

Enter Sir Charles, with a pack of cards in his hand.

Sir Cha. Never was any thing like her behaviour can pick out the very cards I had in my hand; and 'tis as plain as the sun—there—now—there—no—does it—no—there it was—now let's see—they had four honours—and we play'd for the odd trick—damnation! honours were divided—ay!—honours were divided—then a trump was led—and the other side had the trifusion!—this preposterous woman has put it all on my head—[*Puts the cards into his pocket.*] Mighty Madam; I have done with you.

Enter Mrs Drugget.

Mrs Drug. Come, Sir Charles, let me prevail—Come with me and speak to her.

Sir Cha. I don't desire to see her face.

Mrs Drug. If you were to see her all bath'd in tears I am sure it would melt your very heart.

Sir Cha. Madam, it shall be my fault if ever I treated so again—I'll have nothing to say to her—[*ing, stops.*] Does she give up the point?

Mrs Drug. She does, she agrees to any thing.

Sir Cha. Does she allow that the club was the place?

Mrs Drug. Just as you please—she's all submissive.

Sir Cha. Does she own that the club was not the place in the house?

Mrs Drug. She does—she does,

Sir Cha. Then I'll step and speak to her—I'm now clearer in any thing in my life.—But, Mrs D.

AFTER MARRIAGE. 179

get, give me leave to ask you—You are a very sensible woman now—I'll show you—Here are the very cards—

Mrs Drug. Lord, Sir, I understand nothing at all about cards.—

Sir Cha. Damn me, if ever I saw such an obstinate family all my life. [Exit.

Mrs Drug. Lord love 'em, they'll make it up now—and then they'll be as happy as ever. [Exit.

Enter Nancy.

Nan. Well, they may talk what they will of taste, and genteel life—I don't think 'tis natural—Give me Mr Woodley—La! there's that odious thing coming this way.

Enter Lovelace.

Love. My charming little innocent, I have not seen you these three hours.

Nan. I have been very happy these three hours.

Love. My sweet angel, you seem disconcerted—And you neglect your pretty figure—No matter for the present; in a little time I shall make you appear as graceful and genteel as your sister.

Nan. That is not what employs my thoughts, Sir.

Love. Ay, but my pretty little dear, that should engage your attention—to set off and adorn the charms that nature has given you should be the business of your life.

Nan. Ah, but I have learn'd a new song that contradicts what you say; and tho' I am not in a very good humour for singing, yet you shall hear it.

Love. By all means—don't check your fancy—I'm all attention.

Nan. It expresses my sentiments; and when you have heard them, you won't teize me any more.

'S O N G.

'To dance and to dress, and to flout it about;

'To run to park, play, to assembly and rout;

'To wander for ever in whim's giddy maze,

'And one poor hair torture a million of ways;

'To put, at the glass, every feature to school,

'And practise their art on each fop and each fool;

- Of one thing to think, and another to tell:
- These, these are the manners of each giddy belle.
- To smile and to simper, white teeth to display;
- The time in gay follies to trifle away;
- Against every virtue the bosom to steel,
- And only of dress the anxieties feel;
- To be at Eve's ear the insidious decoy;
- The pleasure ne'er taste, yet the mischief enjoy;
- To boast of soft raptures they never can know:
- These, these are the manners of each giddy beau.

[Exit

Nan. May be so, Sir; but I'm not at leisure to receive your instructions—and so your servant, Sir. [Exit

Love. I must have her, notwithstanding this—fi tho' I'm not in love, yet I'm in debt.

Enter Drugget.

Drug. So, Mr Lovelace! Any news from above stairs? Is this absurd quarrel at an end—Have the made it up?

Love. Oh! a mere bagatelle, Sir—these little frays among the better sort of people never last long—Elegant trifles cause elegant disputes; and we come together elegantly again—as you see—for here they come, in perfect good humour.

Enter Sir Charles and Lady Rackett.

Sir Cha. Mr Drugget, I embrace you; Sir, you see me now in the most perfect harmony of spirits.

Drug. What, all reconcil'd again?

Lady Rac. All made up, Sir—I knew how to bring him to my lure—This is the first difference, I think, we ever had, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. And I'll be sworn it shall be the last.

Drug. I am happy at last—Sir Charles, I can spare you an image to put on the top of your house in London.

Sir Cha. Infinitely oblig'd to you.

Drug. Well, well—'Tis time to retire now—I am glad to see you reconciled—and now I'll wish you a good night, Sir Charles—Mr Lovelace, this is your way—fare ye well both—I am glad your quarrels are at an end—This way, Mr Lovelace.

[Exit Lovelace and Drugget

St

Lady Rac. Ah! you're a sad man, Sir Charles, to behave to me as you have done.

Sir Cha. My dear, I grant it—and such an absurd quarrel too—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. Yes—ha, ha!—about such a trifle.

Sir Cha. 'Tis pleasant how we could both fall into such an error—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. Ridiculous beyond expression—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. And then the mistake your father and mother fell into—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. That too is a diverting part of the story—ha, ha!—But, Sir Charles, must I stay and live with my father till I grow as fantastical as his own evergreens?

Sir Cha. No, no, prithee—don't remind me of my folly.

Lady Rac. Ah! my relations were all standing behind counters, selling Whitechapel needles, while your family were spending great estates.

Sir Cha. Nay, nay, spare my blushes.

Lady Rac. How could you say so harsh a thing?—I don't love you.

Sir Cha. It was indelicate, I grant it.

Lady Rac. Am I a vile woman?

Sir Cha. How can you, my angel?

Lady Rac. I shan't forgive you!—I'll have you on your knees for this. [*Sings and plays with him*]—"Go, naughty man."—Ah! Sir Charles!

Sir Cha. The rest of my life shall aim at convincing you how sincerely I love—

Lady Rac. [*sings*.] "Go, naughty man, I can't abide you."—Well! come let us go to rest. [*Going*.] Ah, Sir Charles!—now it is all over, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Oh no, no, no,—my dear! ha, ha!—it was the club indeed.

Lady Rac. Indeed, my love, you're mistaken.

Sir Cha. Oh, no, no, no.

Lady Rac. But I say yes, yes, yes—[*Both laughing*.]

Sir Cha. Psha! no such thing—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. 'Tis so indeed—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. No, no, no—you'll make me die with laughing.

Lady Rac. Ay, and you make me laugh too—ha, ha!
[*Toying with him.*]

Enter Footman.

Foot. Your honour's cap and slippers.

Sir Cha. Ay, lay down my night-cap—and here, take these shoes off. [*He takes 'em off, and leaves 'em at a distance.*] Indeed, my Lady Rackett, you make me ready to expire with laughing—ha, ha!

Lady Rac. You may laugh—but I'm right, notwithstanding.

Sir Cha. How can you say so?

Lady Rac. How can you say otherwise?

Sir Cha. Well, now mind me, my Lady Racket—We can now talk of this matter in good-humour—We can discuss it coolly—

Lady Rac. So we can—and 'tis for that reason I venture to speak to you—Are these the ruffles I bought for you?

Sir Cha. They are, my dear,

Lady Rac. They are very pretty—but indeed you played the card wrong.

Sir Cha. Po, there is nothing so clear—if you will but hear me—only hear me.

Lady Rac. Ah!—but do you hear me—the thing was thus—The adversary's club being the best in the house—

Sir Cha. How can you talk so!—[*somewhat peevish.*]

Lady Rac. See there now—

Sir Cha. Listen to me—This was the affair—

Lady R. Psha! fiddlestick! hear me first.

Sir. Cha. Po—no—damn it, let me speak.

Lady Rac. Well, to be sure you're a strange man.

Sir Cha. Plague and torture! there is no such thing as conversing with you.

Lady Rac. Very well, Sir! fly out again.

Sir Cha. Look here now—here's a pack of cards, now you shall be convinc'd.—

Lady Rac. You may talk till to-morrow; I know I'm right. [*Walks about.*]

Sir Cha. Why then, by all that's perverse, you are the most headstrong—Can't you look here now—here are the very cards.

Lady Rac. Go on; you'll find it out at last.

Sir Cha. Damn it! will you let a man show you. Po!
'tis

'tis all nonsense—I'll talk no more about it—[*puts up the cards.*] Come, we'll go to bed. [*Going.*] Now, only stay a moment—[*takes out the cards.*] Now, mind me—see here.

Lady Rac. No, it does not signify—your head will be clearer in the morning—I'll go to bed!

Sir Cha. Stay a moment, can't ye?

Lady Rac. No—my head begins to ache—[*affectedly.*]

Sir Cha. Why then, damn the cards—there—there [*throwing the cards about*] and there, and there—You may go to bed by yourself; and confusion seize me if I live a moment longer with you—[*Putting on his shoes again.*]

Enter Dimity.

Dim. Did you call, Sir?

Sir Cha. No, never, Madam.

Dim. [*in a fit of laughing.*] What, at it again!

Lady Rac. Take your own way, Sir.

Sir Cha. Now then, I tell you once more you are a vile woman.

Dim. La, Sir! This is charming—I'll run and tell the old couple. [*Exit.*]

Sir Cha. [*still putting on his shoes.*] You are the most perverse, obstinate, nonsensical—

Lovè Rac. Ha, ha! don't make me laugh again, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Hell and the devil—Will you sit down quietly, and let me convince you?

Lady Rac. I don't choose to hear any more about it.

Sir Cha. Why then I believe you are possessed—it is in vain to talk sense and reason to you.

Lady Rac. Thank you for your compliment, Sir—such a man [*with a sneering laugh.*] I never knew the like— [*Sits down.*]

Sir Cha. I promise you, you shall repent of this usage, before you have a moment of my company again—it shan't be in a hurry you may depend, Madam—Now see here—I can prove it to a demonstration [*Sits down by her, she gets up*] Look ye there again now—you have the most perverse and peevish temper—I wish I had never seen your face—I wish I was a thousand miles off from you—Sit down but one moment.

Lady Rac. I'm dispos'd to walk about, Sir.

Sir Cba. Why then, may I perish if ever—a block head—an idiot I was, to marry [*walks about*] such a provoking—impertinent—[*She sits down.*] Damnation!—am so clear in the thing—she is not worth my notice. [*Sits down, turns his back, and looks uneasy.*] I'll tell no more pains about it—[*Pauses for some time, then looks at her.*] Is not it very strange that you won't hear me

Lady Rac. Sir, I am very ready to hear you.

Sir Cba. Very well then—very well—my dear—you remember how the game stood.

Lady Rac. I wish you'd untie my necklace, it hurts me.

Sir Cba. Why can't you listen?

Lady Rac. I tell you it hurts me terribly.

Sir Cba. Death and confusion! there is no bearing this—you may be as wrong as you please; and may never hold four by honours, if I ever endeavour to tell you right again. [*Exit.*]

Enter Mr and Mrs Drugget, Woodley, Lovelace, and Nancy.

Drug. What's here to do now?

Lady Rac. Never was such a man born—I did not find a word to the gentleman—and yet he has been raving about the room like a madman.

Drug. And about a club again, I suppose—Come hither, Nancy; Mr Woodley, she is yours for life.

Mrs Drug. My dear, how can you be so—

Drug. It shall be so—take her for life, Mr Woodley.

Wood. My whole life shall be devoted to her happiness.

Lovs. The devil! and so I am to be left in the lurch this manner, am I?

Lady Rac. Oh! this is only one of those polite disputes which people of quality, who have nothing else to differ about, must always be liable to—This will all be made up.

Drug. Never tell me—'tis too late now—Mr Woodley, I recommend my girl to your care—I shall have nothing now to think of, but my greens, and my image and my shrubbery—though, mercy on all married folks!

lay I! for these wranglings are, I am afraid, *What we must all come to.*

Lady Rackett coming forward.

What we must all come to? What?—Come to what?

Must broils and quarrels be the marriage-lot?

If that's the wife, deep meaning of our poet,

The man's a fool! a blockhead! and I'll show it.

'What could induce him, in an age so nice,

'So fam'd for virtue, so refin'd from vice,

'To form a plan so trivial, false, and low?

'As if a belle could quarrel with a beau:

'As if there were, in these thrice happy days,

'One who from nature or from reason strays!

'There's no cross husband now, no wrangling wife;

'The man is downright ignorant of life.

'Tis the millennium this—devoid of guile.

'Fair gentle truth and white-rob'd candour smile.

'From every-breast the fardid love of gold

'Is banish'd quite—no boroughs now are sold!

'Pray tell me, Sirs—[for I don't know, I vow,]

'Pray—is there such a thing as gaming now?

'Do peers make laws against that giant vice?

'And then at Arthur's break them in a trice?

'No—no—our lives are virtuous all, austere and hard;

'Pray, Ladies—do you ever see a card?

'Those empty boxes show you don't love plays;

'The managers, poor souls! get nothing now a-days.

'If here you come—by chance but once a-week,

'The pit can witness that you never speak:

'Pensive attention sits with decent mien;

'No paint, no naked shoulders, to be seen!"

And yet this grave, this moral, pious age,

May learn one useful lesson from the stage.

Shun strife, ye fair; and, once a contest o'er,

Wake to a blaze the dying flame no more—

From fierce debate, fly all the tender loves;

And Venus cries, "Coachman, put to my doves;"

The genial bed no blooming Grace prepares,

"And every day becomes a day of cares."

B O N T O N

O R,

HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIR

IN TWO ACTS.

By DAVID GARRICK, Esq

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Lord Minikin,</i>	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Edinburgh, 178</i>
<i>Sir John Trolley,</i>	Mr Dodd.	Mr Ward.
<i>Colonel Tivy,</i>	Mr King.	Mr Johnson.
<i>Jessamy-</i>	Mr Breerton.	Mr Woods.
<i>Davy,</i>	Mr La Mash.	Mr La Mash.
<i>Mignon,</i>	Mr Parsons.	Mr Most.
	Mr Barton.	

W O M E N.

<i>Lady Minikin,</i>	Mrs King.	Mrs Walcot.
<i>Miss Titup,</i>	Mrs Abington.	Mrs Sparks.
<i>Gymp,</i>	Miss Platt.	Mrs Mills.

P R O L O G U E.

Written by GEORGE COLEMAN.

Spoken by Mr KING.

FASHION in ev'ry thing bears sov'reign sway,
 And words and periwigs have both their day:
 Each have their purlieus too, are modish each
 In stated districts, wigs as well as speech.
 The Tyburn scratch, thick club, and Temple tie,
 The parson's feather-top friz'd broad and high,

P R O L O G U E

The coachman's cauliflower built tiers on tiers
Differ not more from bags and brigadiers,
Than great St George's or St James's stiles,
From the Broad dialect of broad St Giles.

What is *bon ton*?—Oh, damme, cries a buck—
Half drunk—ask me, my dear, and you're in luck!
Bon ton's to swear, break windows, beat the watch,
Pick up a wench, drink healths, and roar a catch.
Keep it up, keep it up! damme, take your swing!
Bon ton is life, my boy; *bon ton*'s the thing!

Ah! I loves life, and all the joys it yields—
Says madam Fusslock, warm from Spital-fields.
Bone Tone's the space 'twixt Saturday and Monday,
And riding in a one-horse chair o' Sunday!

'Tis drinking tea on summer-afternoons
At Bagnigge-Wells, with china and gilt spoons!
'Tis laying by our stuffs, red cloaks, and pattens,
To dance cow-tillions, all in silks and satins!

Vulgar! cries Miss. Observe in higher life
The feather'd spinster and thrice-feather'd wife!
The club's *bon ton*. *Bon ton*'s a constant trade
Of rout, festino, ball, and masquerade!
'Tis plays and puppet-shews; 'tis something new!
'Tis losing thousands ev'ry night at loo!
Nature it thwarts, and contradicts all reason;
'Tis stiff French stays, and fruit when out of season!
A rose when half a guinea is the price,
A set of hays scarce bigger than six mice;
To visit friends you never wish to see;
Marriage 'twixt those who never can agree;
Old dowagers drest, painted, patch'd, and curl'd;
This is *bon ton*, and this we call the world!

* [True, says my Lord; and thou, my only son,
Whate'er your faults, ne'er sin against *bon ton*!
Who toils for learning at a public school,
And digs for Greek and Latin, is a fool.
French, French, my boy's the thing! *jasez!* prate, chatter!
Trim be the mode, whipt-syllabub the matter!
Walk like a Frenchman! for on English pegs
Moves pative awkwardness with two left legs.
Of courtly friendship form a treacherous league;
Seduce mens daughters, with their wives intrigue: }
In slightly semicircles round your nails,
Keep your teeth clean—and grin, if small talk fails— }
But never laugh, whatever jest prevails!
Nothing but nonsense e'er gave laughter birth;
That vulgar way the vulgar show their mirth.
Laughter's a rude convulsion, sense that justles,
Disturbs the cockles, and distorts the muscles.
Hearts may be black, but all should wear clean faces;
The graces, boy! the graces, graces, graces!]

Such

* The lines between crotchets are omitted at the theatre.

P R O L O G U E.

Such is *bow son*! and, walk this city thro',
 In building, scribbling, fighting, and vertu,
 And various other shapes, 'twill rise to view. }
 To-night our Bayes, with bold, but careless tints,
 Hits off a sketch or two, like Daryl's prints.
 Should connoisseurs allow his rough draughts strike 'em,
 'Twill be *bow son* to see 'em and to like 'em.

A C T I.

Enter Lady MINIKIN and Miss TITTUP.

Lady MINIKIN.

IT is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my lord; I had no love for him before. I married him, and you know matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride that he should neglect me and run after other women.

Miss Tit. Ha, ha, ha! How can you be so hypocritical, lady Minikin; as to pretend to uneasiness at such trifles: but, pray, have you made any new discoveries of my lord's gallantry?

La. Min. New discoveries! why, I saw him myself yesterday morning in a hackney coach with a minx in a pink cardinal; you shall absolutely burn your's, Tittup, for I shall never bear to see one of that colour again.

Miss Tit. Sure she does not suspect me. [*Aside.*] And where was your ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

La. Min. Taking the air with colonel Tivy in his vis-a-vis.

Miss Tit. But, my dear lady Minikin, how can you be so angry that my lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power in the vis-a-vis?

La. Min. What, with my lord's friend, and my friend's lover! [*Takes her by the hand.*] O fie, Tittup.

Miss Tit. Poo, poo! Love and friendship are very fine names, to be sure, but they are mere visiting acquaintance; we know their names indeed, talk of 'em sometimes, and let 'em knock at our doors, but we never let 'em in, you know.

[*Looking roguishly at her.*
La.]

La. Min. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miss Tit. I am extremely indifferent in these affairs, thanks to my education.—We must marry, you know, because other people of fashion marry; but I should think very meanly of myself if, after I was married, I should feel the least concern at all about my husband.

La. Min. I hate to praise myself, and yet I may with truth aver, that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, so consummate a contempt for her lord, as I have for most honourable and puissant Earl of Minikin, Viscount Periwinkle, and Baron Titmouse—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. But is it not strange, lady Minikin, that merely his being your husband should create such indifference? for certainly, in every other eye, his lordship has great accomplishments.

La. Min. Accomplishments! thy head is certainly turn'd; if you know any of 'em, pray let's have 'em; they are a novelty, and will amuse me.

Miss Tit. *Imprimis*, he is a man of quality.

La. Min. Which, to be sure, includes all the cardinal virtues:—poor girl! go on.

Miss Tit. He is a very handsome man.

La. Min. He has a very bad constitution.

Miss Tit. He has wit.

La. Min. He is a lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miss Tit. He has great good-nature.

La. Min. No wonder, he's a fool.

Miss Tit. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

La. Min. Was a great one—but he games; and, if fairly, he's undone; if not, he deserves to be hang'd—and so, *exit* my lord Minikin—And now, let your wise uncle and my good cousin Sir John Trotley, baronet, enter: Where is he, pray?

Miss Tit. In his own room, I suppose, reading pamphlets and newspapers against the enormities of the times; if he stays here a week longer, notwithstanding my expectations from him, I shall certainly affront him.

La. Min. I am a great favourite, but it is impossible much longer to act up to his very righteous ideas of things.—Isn't it pleasant to hear him abuse every body,
and

and every thing, and yet always finishing with a—You'll excuse me, cousin!—Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. What do you think the Goth said to me yesterday? One of the knots of his tie hanging down his left shoulder, and his fring'd cravat nicely twisted down his breast and thrust thro' his gold button-hole, which look'd exactly like my little Barbet's head in his gold collar:—"Niece Tittup, (cries he, drawing himself up), I protest against this manner of conducting yourself, both at home and abroad."—What are your objections, Sir John, answered I, a little pertly?—"Various" and manifold, (replied he), I have no time to enumerate particulars now; but I will venture to prophecy, if you keep whirling round in the vortex of pantheons, operas, festinos, coteries, masquerades, and all the devilades in this town, your head will be giddy, down you will fall, lose the name of Lucretia, and be call'd nothing but Tittup ever after—You'll excuse me, cousin!"—And so he left me.

La. Min. O the barbarian!

Enter Gymp.

Gymp. A card, your ladyship, from Mrs Pewitt.

La. Min. Poor Pewitt!—If she can be but seen at public places with a woman of quality, she's the happiest of plebeians.

[*Reads the card.*]

"Mrs Pewitt's respects to Lady Minikin and Miss Tittup; hopes to have the pleasure of attending them to Lady Filligree's ball this evening.—Lady Daifey fees masks."—We'll certainly attend her.—*Gymp.* put some message-cards upon my toilet, I'll send an answer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he must make some visits for me to-day again, and send me a list of those he made yesterday: he must be sure to call at lady Pettitoes; and if she should unluckily be at home, he must say that he came to inquire after her sprain'd ankle.

Miss Tit. Ay, ay, give our compliments to her sprain'd ankle.

La. Min. That woman's so fat, she'll never get well of it; and I am resolv'd not to call at her door myself, till I am sure of not finding her at home.—I am horridly low-spirited to-day; do, send your Colonel to play at chess.

chels with me. Since he belong'd to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like every thing that loves my Titty. *[Kisses her.]*

Miss Tit. I know you do, my dear Lady.

[Kisses her.]

La. Min. That sneer I don't like; if she suspects, I shall hate her. *[Aside.]*—Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dress for the masquerade; and if that won't raise my spirits, you must assist me to plague my Lord a little. *[Exit.]*

Miss Tit. Yes; and I'll plague my Lady a little, or I am much mistaken: my Lord shall know every tittle that has passed. What a poor, blind, half-witted, self-conceited creature, this dear friend and relation of mine is! And what a fine spirited gallant foldier my Colonel is! My lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune: my Lord likes me, and I like my Lord; however, not so much as he imagines, or to play the fool so rashly as he may expect; she must be very silly indeed, who can't flutter about the flame without burning her wings.—What a great revolution in this family in the space of fifteen months!—We went out of England a very aukward, regular, good English family! but half a year in France, and a winter passed in the warmer climate of Italy, have ripen'd our minds to every refinement of ease, dissipation, and pleasure.

Enter Colonel Tivy.

Col. Tivy. May I hope, Madam, that your humble servant had some share in your last reverie?

Miss Tit. How is it possible to have the least knowledge of colonel Tivy, and not make him the principal object of one's reflections.

Col. Tivy. That man must have very little feeling and taste who is not proud to have a place in the thoughts of the finest woman in Europe.

Miss Tit. O fie, Colonel! *[Curtseys and blushes.]*

Col. Tivy. By my honour, Madam, I mean what I say.

Miss Tit. By your honour, Colonel! Why will you pass off your counters to me? Don't I know that you fine gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given at

at the gaming-table, and which indeed ought to be only honour you shou'd make free with.

Col. Tivy. How can you, Miss, treat me so cruel Have I not absolutely forsworn dice, mistress, e thing, since I dar'd to offer myself to you?

Miss Tit. Yes, Colonel; and when I dare to rec you, you may return to every thing again, and not late the laws of the present happy matrimonial estab ment.

Col. Tivy. Give me but your consent, Madam, your life to come—

Miss Tit. Do you get my consent, Colonel, and take care of my life to come.

Col. Tivy. How shall I get your consent?

Miss Tit. By getting me in the humour.

Col. Tivy. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss Tit. O, there are several ways; I am very g natur'd.

Col. Tivy. Are you in the humour now?

Miss Tit. Try me.

Col. Tivy. How shall I?

Miss Tit. How shall I!—You a soldier, and not k the art military?—How shall I?—I'll tell you how When you have a subtle, treacherous, politic enem deal with, never stand shilly shally, and lose your in treaties and parleys, but cock your hat, draw fword;—march, beat drum—dub, dub, a dub—pre fire, piss-pauff—'tis done!—they fly, they yield.— toria! victoria!—

[*Running*

Col. Tivy. Stay, stay, my dear, dear angel!

[*Bringing her*

Miss Tit. No, no, no, I have no time to be b now: besides, lady Minikin is in the vapours, and w you at chess; and my Lord is low-spirited, and want at picquet: my uncle is in an ill-humour, and want to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. Tivy. And will you, Miss?

Miss Tit. Will I!—No, I never do as I am bid; you ought—so go to my Lady.

Col. Tivy. Nay, but Miss.

Miss Tit. Nay, but Colonel, if you won't obey commanding officer, you shall be broke, and then my

on't accept of you; so march, Colonel:—look'ee, Sir, will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose. *[Exit.]*

Col. Tivy. What a mad devil it is!—Now, if I had the soft affection for the girl, I should be damnably vex'd at his!—But she has a fine fortune; and I must have her if I can.—Tol, lol, lol, &c. *[Exit singing.]*

Enter Sir John Trotley and Davy.

Sir John. Hold your tongue, Davy; you talk like a fool.

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I cou'd live ere for ever!

Sir John. More shame for you.—Live here for ever!—What, among thieves and pick-pockets!—What a resolution since my time! the more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation. What a dreadful change has time wrought about in twenty years! I should not have known the place again, nor the people; all the signs that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down.—Not a bob or tie wig to be seen! All the degrees from the parade in St James's Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—the mason laying bricks, the baker with his basket, the post-boy crying newspapers, and the doctors prescribing physic, have all their hair tied up; and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow.—Mr Wisp will do it for me—your honour and I look like Philistines among 'em.

Sir John. And I shall break your head if it is tied up; I hate innovation.—All confusion, and no distinction!—The streets now are as smooth as a turnpike-road: no rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches: those who ride in 'em are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to waken 'em when they are to be set down.—What luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour? 'feckins, I lik'd it ugely.

Sir John. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when

there is every thing to delight my eye and heart?

Sir John. 'Tis all deceit and delusion.

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, arting; such a power of fine fights, fine shops full of things; and then such fine illuminations all of a such fine dainty ladies in the streets, so civil and less—they talk of country-girls, these here so healthy and rosy by half.

Sir John. Sirrah, they are prostitutes; and to delude and destroy you: they are painted and they who hearken to 'em, like Jezebel of go to the dogs: if you dare to look at 'em, you taint; and if you speak to 'em, you are undone.

Davy. Bless us, bless us!—How does you know all this?—Were they as bad in your time?

Sir John. Not by half, Davy—In my time, there was a sort of decency in the worst of women:—but now they watch like tigers for their prey, and come to their dens of infamy—See, Davy, how they lead me by my neckcloth.

[Shows his neckcloth.]

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour would not have hurt you.

Sir John. Well, we'll get away as fast as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope; for I have not yet got my bellyfull yet.

Sir John. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you are a profligate: you shan't go out again to-night; to-morrow keep in my room, and stay till I can lend you my things, and see they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour then won't keep your word?

Sir John. Why, what did I promise you?

Davy. That I should take sixpence of me to-morrow, and a shilling-place at the theatre to-morrow.

Sir John. Well, well, so I did: is it a more than I promised you?

Davy. O yes, and written by a clergyman; in the Rival Cananites, or the Tragedy of Bragg.

Sir John. Be a good lad, and I won't be worse.

word; there's money for you.—[*Gives him some.*] But come straight home, for I shall want to go to bed.

Davy. To be sure, your honour—As I am to go so soon, I'll make a night of it. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir John. This fellow wou'd turn rake and macaroni if he was to stay here a week longer—Bless me, what dangers are in this town at every step! O that I were once settled safe again at Trotley Place!—Nothing but to save my country shou'd bring me back again. My niece Lucretia is so be-fashion'd and be-devill'd, that nothing, I fear, can save her: however, to ease my conscience, I must try. But what can be expected from the young women of these times, but fallow looks, wild schemes, saucy words, and loose morals!—They lie a-bed all day, sit up all night: if they are silent, they are gaming; and if they talk, 'tis either scandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twisted rattlesnake tippets.—O tempora, O mores!

Lord. Minikin discovered in his powdering gown, with Jessamy and Mignon.

L. Min. Pry'thee, Mignon, don't plague me any more; dost think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but to be tortur'd all day under thy infernal fingers? give me my clothes.

Mig. Ven you los's your monee, my Lor, you no goot humour, the devil may dress your cheveu for me!

[*Exit.*]

L. Min. That fellow's an impudent rascal, but he's a genius; so I must bear with him. Our beef and pudding enriches their blood so much, that the slaves in a month forget their misery and soup-maigre.—O my head!—A chair, Jessamy!—I must absolutely change my wine-merchant: I can't taste his champagne without disordering myself for a week!—Heigho!—[*Sighs.*]

Enter Miss Tittup.

Miss Tit. What makes you sigh, my Lord?

L. Min. Because you were so near me, child.

Miss Tit. Indeed! I shou'd rather have thought my Lady had been with you—By your looks, my Lord, I am afraid Fortune jilted you last night?

L. Min. No, faith; our champagne was not good.

yesterday, and I am vapour'd like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like—like—

Miss Tit. Like something very fine, to be sure; but pray, keep your simile for the next time;—and hark'ee—a little prudence will not be amiss; Mr Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse. [*Half aside.*]

Jess. O, pray don't mind me, Madam.

L. Min. Gadso, Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you

Jess. I shall, my Lord;—Miss thinks that every body is blind in the house but herself. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Miss Tit. Upon my word, my Lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town-talk.

L. Min. And so I will, my dear; and therefore, to prevent surprise, I'll lock the door. [*Locks it.*]

Miss Tit. What do you mean, my Lord?

L. Min. Prudence, child, prudence; I keep all my ewels under lock and key.

Miss Tit. You are not in possession yet, my Lord: I can't stay two minutes: I only came to tell you that lady Minikin saw us yesterday in the hackney-coach; she did not know me, I believe; she pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

L. Min. No intentions, I hope, of being fond of me?

Miss Tit. No, no: make yourself easy; she hates you most unalterably.

L. Min. You have given me spirits again.

Miss Tit. Her pride is alarm'd that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

L. Min. Her pride then has been alarm'd ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss Tit. But, dear my Lord, let us be merry and wife; should she ever be convinc'd that we have a *tendre* for each other, she certainly wou'd proclaim it, and then——

L. Min. We shou'd be envy'd, and we shou'd be laugh'd at, my sweet cousin.

Miss Tit. Nay, I wou'd have her mortify'd too—for tho' I love her Ladyship sincerely, I cannot say but, I love a little mischief as sincerely: but then if my uncle

Trotley shou'd know of our affair, he is so old-fashion'd, prudish, and out-of-the-way, he wou'd either strike me out of his will, or insist upon my quitting the house.

L. Min. My good cousin is a queer mortal, that's certain; I wish we could get him handsomely into the country again—He has a fine fortune to leave behind him—

Miss Tit. But then he lives so regularly, and never makes use of a physician, that he may live these twenty years.

L. Min. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miss Tit. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him; I suppose, reading his formal books when I was in the country with him, and going so constantly to church, with my elbows stuck to my hips, and my toes turn'd in, has given me these foolish prejudices.

L. Min. Then you must affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

[*Knocking at the door.*]

Sir John. [*without.*] My Lord, my Lord, are you busy?

[*My Lord locks the door softly.*]

Miss Tit. Heav'ns! 'tis that detestable brute, my uncle!

L. Min. That horrid dog, my cousin!

Miss Tit. What shall we do, my Lord? [*Softly.*]

Sir John. [*at the door.*] Nay, my Lord, my Lord, I heard you; pray, let me speak with you.

L. Min. Ho, Sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon; I'll put up my papers and open the door.

Miss Tit. Stay, stay, my Lord, I wou'd not meet him now for the world; if he sees me here alone with you, he'll rave like a madman: put me up the chimney; any where.

L. Min. [*aloud.*] I'm coming, Sir John! here, here, get behind my great chair; he shan't see you, and you may hear all: I'll be short and pleasant with him.

[*Puts her behind the chair, and opens the door.*]

Enter Sir John.

[*During this scene, my Lord turns the chair, as Sir John moves, to conceal Tittup.*]

Sir John. You'll excuse me, my Lord, that I have broken

broken in upon you? I heard you talking pretty loud : what, have you nobody with you? what were you about, cousin?

[*Looking about.*]

L. Min. A particular affair, Sir John; I always lock myself up to study my speeches, and speak 'em aloud for the sake of the tone and action.—

Sir John. Ay, ay, 'tis the best way; I am sorry I disturb'd you;—you'll excuse me, cousin.

L. Min. I am rather oblig'd to you, Sir John:—intense application to these things ruins my health; but one must do it for the sake of the nation.

Sir John. May be so; and I hope the nation will be the better for't—You'll excuse me.

L. Min. Excuse you, Sir John! I love your frankness; but why won't you be franker still? we have always something for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir John. You must know, my Lord, that I love to know what I eat.—I hate to travel where I don't know my way; and since you have brought in foreign fashions and figaries, every thing and every body are in masquerade; your men and manners, too, are as much fritter'd and fricassee'd as your beef and mutton: I love a plain dish, my Lord.

Miss Tit. [*peeping.*] I wish I was out of the room, or he at the bottom of the Thames.

Sir John. But to the point.—I came, my Lord, to open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; shall I do it freely?

Miss Tit. Now for it.

L. Min. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, cousin, and deserves all the kindness you can show her.

[*Lord Minikin and Tittup make signs at each other.*]

Sir John. She must deserve it, tho', before she shall have it; and I wou'd have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her shoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Miss Tit. O, frightful! [*Aside.*]

L. Min. Don't you think a taper leg, and falling shoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, Sir John?

Sir John. And therefore ought to be conceal'd; 'tis their interest to conceal 'em: when you take from men the

the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands;—and then taper legs, falling shoulders, and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

L. Min. Well said, Sir John! ha, ha!—Your niece shall wear a horseman's coat and jack-boots, to please you.

Sir John. You may sneer, my Lord; but for all that, I think my niece in a bad way. She must leave me and the country, forsooth, to travel and see good company and fashions! I have seem 'em too, and wish from my heart that she is not much the worse for her journey.—You'll excuse me!

L. Min. But why in a passion, Sir John?—

[*My Lord nods and laughs at Miss Tittup, who peeps from behind.*]

Don't you think that my Lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the right road?

Sir John. Zounds! my Lord, you are out of it yourself: this comes of your travelling; all the town knows how you and my Lady live together; and I must tell you—you'll excuse me!—that my niece suffers by the bargain; prudence, my Lord, is a very fine thing.

L. Min. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a button-hole; but I don't choose to wear one.—You'll excuse me!

Sir John. I wish that he who first chang'd long neckcloths for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth that I wou'd give him.

L. Min. Pry'thee, baronet, don't be so horribly out of the way; prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality; we got rid of our *mauvais honte* at the time that we imported our neighbour's rouge and their morals.

Sir John. Did you ever hear the like? I am not surpris'd, my Lord, that you think so lightly and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband; your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

L. Min. Will you have her, Sir John? She is very much at your service.

Sir

Sir John. Profligate!—What did you marry her for, my Lord?

L. Min. Convenience!—Marriage is not now-a-days an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they who marry for love, and such old-fashion'd stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those that advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir John. I have done, my Lord; Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from Sir John Trotley, baronet.

[*Whistles and walks about.*]

Miss Tit. I am frighten'd out of my wits!

[*Lord Minikin sings, and sits down.*]

Sir John. Pray, my Lord, what husband is this you have got for her?

L. Min. A friend of mine; a man of wit, and a fine gentleman.

Sir John. May be so; and yet make a damn'd husband for all that.—You'll excuse me!—What estate has he, pray?

L. Min. He's a colonel: his elder brother, Sir Tan Tivy, will certainly break his neck; and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir John. Here's morals!—A happy man when his brother has broke his neck!—a happy man—Mercy on me!

L. Min. Why, he'll have six thousand a-year, Sir John—

Sir John. I don't care what he'll have, nor I don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady, and let her have a fine gentleman; I shan't hinder her: I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for 'em, not I; I can't live among you, nor eat with you, nor game with you; I hate cards and dice; I will neither rob nor be robb'd; I am contented with what I have, and am very happy, my Lord, though my brother has not broke his neck.—You'll excuse me! [Exit.]

L. Min. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox, come out of your hole! Ha, ha, ha!

Miss Tit. Indeed, my Lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley Manor, that's positive!

—*Exit.*

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—But no matter, there's no danger of his breaking his neck, so I'll e'en make myself happy with what I have, and behave to him for the future as if he was a poor relation.

L. Min. [*kneeling, snatching her hand, and kissing it.*] I must kneel and adore you for your spirit; my sweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter Sir John.

Sir John. One thing I had forgot. [*Starts.*

Miss Tit. Ha! he's here again.

Sir John. Why, what the devil!—heigho! my niece Lucretia, and my virtuous Lord, studying speeches for the good of the nation!—Yes, yes, you have been making fine speeches, indeed, my Lord; and your arguments have prevail'd, I see. I beg your pardon! I did not mean to interrupt your studies.—You'll excuse me, my Lord!

L. Min. [*smiling, and mocking him.*] You'll excuse me, Sir John!

Sir John. O yes, my Lord; but I'm afraid the devil won't excuse you at the proper time.—Miss Lucretia, how do you, child? You are to be married soon—I wish the gentleman joy, Miss Lucretia; he is a happy man, to be sure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely so.

Miss Tit. Upon my word, uncle, you are always putting bad constructions upon things; my Lord has been soliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment extorted a consent from me—he was thanking and wishing me joy—in his foolish manner. [*Hesitating.*

Sir John. Is that all! But how came you here, child?—did you fly down the chimney, or in at the window? for I don't remember seeing you when I was here before.

Miss Tit. How can you talk so, Sir John?—You really confound me with your suspicions;—and then you ask so many questions, and I have so many things to do; that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haste, I shan't get my dress ready for the ball; so I must run.—You'll excuse me, uncle! [*Exit running.*

Sir John. A fine hopeful young lady that, my Lord!

L. Min. She's well-bred, and has wit.

Sir

Sir John. She has wit and breeding enough to at her relations, and bestow favours on your Lord but I must tell you plainly, my Lord—you'll excuse—that your marrying your Lady, my cousin, to a ill; and sending for my niece, your cousin, to do her—

L. Min. You're warm, Sir John, and don't know world, and I never contend with ignorance and you'll live with me some time, and you'll be satisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family; mean time command my house.—I must attend immediately Lady Filligree's masquerade; and I am for won't make one with us. Here, Jessamy, give me a mino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle wait any thing. You'll excuse me, Sir John; tol, lol, &c.

[*Exit*]

Sir John. The world's at an end! Here's fine here are precious doings! This lord is a pillar state too; no wonder that the building is in danger such rotten supporters! - Heighho!—And then my lady Minikin, what a friend and husband she is with!—Let me consider:—Shou'd I tell the good man of these pranks, I may only make more mischief and mayhap go near to kill her; for she's as tender as she's virtuous—Poor lady! I'll e'en go and comfort directly; endeavour to draw her from the wicked this town into the country, where she shall have re fowling, and fishing, to keep up her spirits; and I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune with I intended to reward the virtues of Miss Lucretia, with a plague to her!

Lady Minikin's Apartments.

Lady Minikin and Colonel Tivy discovered.

La. Min. Don't urge it, Colonel; I can't think coming home from the masquerade this evening; shou'd pass for my niece, it wou'd make an uproar the servants, and perhaps from the mistake bring your match with Tittup.

Col. Tivy. My dear Lady Minikin, you know marriage with your niece is only a secondary confidence my first and principal object is you—you, Madam Therefore, my dear Lady, give me your promise to

the ball with me; you must, lady Minikin: a bold young fellow and a soldier as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder when the town has capitulated.

La. Min. But it has not capitulated, and perhaps never will; however, Colonel, since you are so furious, I must come to terms, I think—Keep your eyes upon me at the ball, I think I may expect that; and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your signal for pursuing; I shall get home as fast as I can, you may follow me as fast as you can; my Lord and Tittup will be otherwise employed; Gymp will let us in the back way—No, no; my heart misgives me!

Col. Tivy. Then I am miserable!

La. Min. Nay, rather than you should be miserable, Colonel, I will indulge your martial spirit: meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet. [*Throws down her glove.*]

Col. Tivy, [*seizing it.*] Thus I accept your sweet challenge; and if I fail you, may I hereafter, both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward.

[*Kneels and kisses her hand.*]

Enter Sir John, opening the door.

Sir John. May I presume, cousin?

La. Min. Ha!

[*Squalls.*]

Sir John. Mercy upon us, what are we at now!

[*Looks astonished.*]

La. Min. How can you be so rude, Sir John, to come into a lady's room without first knocking at the door? you have frighten'd me out of my wits!

Sir John. I am sure you have frighten'd me out of mine!

Col. Tivy. Such rudeness deserves death!

Sir John. Death indeed! for I shall never recover myself again! All pigs of the same stye! All studying for the good of the nation!

La. Min. We must soothe him, and not provoke him.

[*Half aside to the Colonel.*]

Col. Tivy. I wou'd cut his throat if you'd permit me.

[*Aside to Lady Minikin.*]

Sir John. The devil has got his hoof into the house, and has corrupted the whole family; I'll get out of it as fast as I can, lest he shou'd lay hold of me too.

[*Going.*]

La.

La. Min. Sir John, I must insist upon your not away in a mistake.

Sir John. No mistake, my Lady; I am the convinced—Mercy on me!

La. Min. I must beg you, Sir John, not to make wrong constructions upon this accident; you must know that the moment you was at the door—I had the Colonel no longer to be his enemy in his defence on Miss Tittup—this threw him into such a rage that upon my promising my interest with you—adding him joy—he fell upon his knees, and—and—*ing.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Col. Tivy. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes, I fell upon my knees—and—and—

Sir John. Ay, ay, fell upon your knees, and—Ha, ha! a very good joke, faith; and the best of all is that they are wishing joy all over the house upon the same occasion; and my Lord is wishing joy; and my Lord is wishing joy, and you, with all my heart.

La. Min. Upon my word, Sir John, your expressions affect me strongly; and tho' my resentment curb'd by my regard, my tears cannot be restrained—the only resource my innocence has left. [*Exit*]

Col. Tivy. I reverence you, Sir, as a relation; but as her slanderer, I detest you: her tears are dried, and my honour satisfied: you know what I will take your choice;—time, place, sword, or pistol—decide it calmly, and determine as you please. I am ready, Sir John.

Sir John. Very fine, truly! and so between the coward and the bully, my throat is to be cut! I am guilty of all sort of iniquity; and when they are over'd, no humility and repentance;—the ladies have no source to their tongues or their tears, and the same to their swords.—That I may not be drawn in by one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry in the country while I retain my senses and can flee with a whole skin.

A C T II.

Enter Sir JOHN and JESSAMY.

Sir JOHN.

[HERE is no bearing this! What a land are we in! Upon my word, Mr Jessamy, you should look well the house, there are certainly rogues about it: for I but cross the way just now to the pamphlet-shop, buy *A Touch of the Times*, and they have taken my paper from my side; ay, and had a pluck at my watch; but I heard of their tricks, and had it sowed to my pocket.

Jes. Don't be alarm'd, Sir John; 'tis a very common thing; and if you will walk the streets without a sword, you will be pick'd up by privateers of all kinds: ay, ha!

Sir John. Not be alarm'd when I am robb'd!—Why, they might have cut my throat with my own hanger; I can't sleep a wink all night: so pray lend me some weapon of defence; for I am sure, if they attack me in the main street, they'll be with me at night again.

Jes. I'll lend you my own sword, Sir John; but be assur'd there's no danger: there's robbing and murder every night under my window, but it no more disturbs me than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir John. Well, well, be that as it will, I must be up-my guard. What a dreadful place this is! But 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times: the great folks rob, and poor folks rob, no wonder that murder ensues; ay, sad, sad!—Well, let me but get over this night, and I leave this den of thieves to-morrow. How long will our lord and lady stay at this masking and mummering ere they come home?

Jes. 'Tis impossible to say the time, Sir; that merely depends upon the spirit of the company and the nature of the entertainment: for my own part, I generally make myself till four or five in the morning.

Sir John. Why, what the devil, do you make one at these masqueradings?

Jes. I seldom miss, Sir: I may venture to say, that

nobody knows the trim and small talk of the plater than I do; I was always reckon'd an incomer mask.

Sir John. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb sure.

Jef. An odd ridiculous accident happen'd to masquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top and had drank a little too freely of the Champaign believe.

Sir John. You'll be hang'd, I believe.

Jef. Wit flew about; in short, I was in spirit last, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleasure went to dancing: and who do you think I danced minuet with? he, he! pray guess, Sir, John?

Sir John. Danc'd a minuet with! [*Ha*

Jef. My own lady, that's all: the eyes of the assembly were upon us; my Lady dances well, and I believe I am pretty tolerable: after the dance, I was running into a little coquetry and small talk with her.

Sir John. With your lady?—Chaos is come a

Jef. With my lady—but upon my turning me thus—[*conceitedly*] egad, she caught me; whips me who I was. I wou'd fain have laugh'd her out of it wou'd not do.—No, no, Jeffamy, says she, I to be deceiv'd: pray, wear gloves for the future; may as well go bare-fac'd as show that hand and darning.

Sir John. What a sink of iniquity!—Prostitute all sides, from the lord to the pick-pocket. [*Pray*, Mr Jeffamy, among your other virtues, I hope you game a little, eh, Mr Jeffamy?

Jef. A little whist, or so.—But I am tied up for dice; I must never touch a box again.

Sir John. I wish you was tied up somewhere sweat from toptoe! [*Aside.*]—Pray lend me your Mr Jeffamy; I shall go to my room. And let my Lady, and my niece Tittup know, that I beg the excuse ceremonies; that I must be up and gone they go to bed; that I have a most profound respect love for them; and—that I hope we shall never meet another again as long as we live.

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Jef. I shall certainly obey your commands. What poor ignorant wretches these country gentlemen are!

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir John. If I stay in this place another day, it would throw me into a fever! Oh, I wish it was morning!—This comes of visiting my relations!

Enter Davy, drunk.

So, you wicked wretch you—where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour—London for ever!

Sir John. Did not I order you to come directly from the play, and not be idling and raking about?

Davy. Servants don't do what they are bid in London.

Sir John. And did I not order you not to make a jackanapes of yourself, and tie your hair up like a monkey?—

Davy. And therefore I did it—no pleasing the ladies without this—my Lord's servants call you an old out-of-fashion'd codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir John. Here's an imp of the devil!—He is undone, and will poison the whole country.—Sirrah, get every thing ready, I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, Sir?—I want to go to bed myself, Sir.

Sir John. Why, how now—you are drunk too, Sirrah.

Davy. I am a little, your honour, because I have been drinking.

Sir John. That is not all—you have been in bad company, Sirrah!

Davy. Indeed your honour's mistaken, I never kept such good company in all my life.

Sir John. The fellow does not understand me—Where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking, to be sure, if I am a drunkard; and if you had been drinking too, as I have been, you would not be in such a passion with a body—it makes one so good-natur'd—

Sir John. This is another addition to my misfortunes!

I shall have this fellow carry into the country a vices as will corrupt the whole parish.

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your ship.

Sir John. Get away, you beast you, and sleep debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or leave you behind as a proper person to make one Lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better—Give me more wag work, and the key of the ale-cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another.

[*Struts*]

Sir John. Here's a reprobate!—This is the continuation of my misery!—But harkee, villain—go to and sleep off your iniquity; and then pack up the or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport your life.

Davy. That for you, old codger—[*Snaps his fingers*] I know the law better than to be frighten'd with shine! I wish that I was to live here all my days! This is life indeed! a servant lives up to his eyes ever; they have wages, and board-wages, and not do but to grow fat and saucy—They are as hard on their matter: they play for ever at cards, swear like perors, drink like fishes, and go a-wenching with a ease and tranquillity as if they were going to a feast. Oh, 'tis a fine life!

[*Exit*]

SCENE, A Chamber in Lord Minikin's house

Enter Lord Minikin and Miss Tittup, in masquerade dresses, lighted by Jeffamy.

L. Min. Set down the candles, Jeffamy; and your lady come home, let me know—Be sure you are out of the way.

Jef. I have liv'd too long with your Lordship to take the caution—Who the devil have we got now? but my Lord's business, and not mine.

Miss Tit. [*pulling off her mask.*] Upon my word, Lord, this coming home so soon from the masque very imprudent, and will certainly be observ'd.—most inconceivably frighten'd, I can assure you—uncle Trotley has a light in his room; the accident to-morrow will certainly keep him upon the watch—

my Lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country.—I find that my English heart, tho' it has ventur'd so far, grows fearful, and awkward to practise the freedoms of warmer climates—[*My Lord takes her by the hand.*] If you will not desist, my Lord—we are separated for ever—The sight of the precipice turns my head; I have been giddy with it too long, and must turn from it while I can.—Pray be quiet, my Lord, I will meet you to-morrow.

L. Min. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my situation.—Let the weak, bashful, coyish whiner be intimidated with these faint alarms; but let the bold experienced lover kindle at the danger, and like the eagle in the midst of storms thus bounce upon his prey. [*Takes hold of her.*]

Miss Tit. Dear Mr Eagle, be merciful; pray, let the poor Pigeon fly for this once.

L. Min. If I do, my Dove, may I be curs'd to have my wife as fond of me as I am now of thee.

[*Offers to kiss her.*]

Jef. [*without, knocking at the door.*] My Lord, my Lord!—

Miss Tit. [*screams.*] Ha!

L. Min. Who's there?

Jef. [*peeping.*] 'Tis I, my Lord; may I come in?

L. Min. Damn the fellow! What's the matter?

Jef. Nay, not much, my Lord—only my Lady's come home.

Miss Tit. Then I'm undone—What shall I do?—I'll run into my own room.

L. Min. Then she may meet you going to her's.

Jef. There's a dark, deep closet, my Lord—Miss may hide herself there.

Miss Tit. For heaven's sake, put me into it; and when her Ladyship's safe, let me know, my Lord.—What an escape have I had!

L. Min. The moment her evil spirit is laid, I'll let my angel out. [*Puts her into the closet.*] Lock the door on the inside—Come softly to my room, Jessamy—

Jef. If a board creaks, your Lordship shall never give me a lac'd waistcoat again. [*Exeunt.*]

of home—But don't tremble so, Gymp. The harm, I assure you.—The Colonel is to marry me and it is proper to settle some matters relating to them. They are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, Madam; to be sure it is proper you talk together—I know you mean nothing but my convenience—but indeed there will be bloodshed.

Col. Tivy. The girl's a fool. I have no sword on my side.

Gymp. But my Lord has, and you may kill or be killed with that.—I know you mean nothing but my convenience; but I certainly heard him go up the back stairs into his room talking with Jessamy.

La. Min. 'Tis impossible but the girl must have overheard this—Can't you ask Whisp, or Mignon, or the master is come in!

Gymp. Lord, my Lady, they are always drunk and asleep in the kitchen.

La. Min. This frighten'd fool has made me as jealous as herself. Hark!—Colonel, I'll swear there is something upon the stairs; now I am in the field, I find myself a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodshed.

Col. Tivy. I'll slip down with Gymp this back stairs.

Col. Tivy. I shall certainly be taken prisoner; [*Goes behind the board.*] You'll let me know when the enemy's decamp'd.

La. Min. Leave that to me——Do you, Gymp, go down the back-stairs, and leave me to face my Lord; I think I can match him at hypocrisy. [*Sits down.*]

Enter Lord Minikin.

L. Min. What, is your Ladyship so soon return'd from lady Fillagree's?

La. Min. I am sure, my Lord, I ought to be more surpris'd at your being here so soon, when I saw you so well entertain'd in a *tete-a-tete* with a lady in crimson——Such fights, my Lord, will always drive me from my most favourite amusements.

L. Min. You find, at least, that the lady, whoever she was, cou'd not engage me to stay, when I found your Ladyship had left the ball.

La. Min. Your Lordship's sneering upon my unhappy temper may be a proof of your wit, but is none of your humanity; and this behaviour is as great an insult upon me as even your falsehood itself.

[*Pretends to sweep.*]

L. Min. Nay, my dear lady Minikin, if you are resolv'd to play tragedy, I shall roar away too, and pull out my cambrick handkerchief.

La. Min. I think, my Lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakness and your brutality will only expose us to our servants.——Where is Tittup, pray?—

L. Min. I left her with the Colonel.—A masquerade to young folks upon the point of matrimony is as delightful as it is disgusting to those who are happily married, and are wise enough to love home and the company of their wives.

[*Takes hold of her hand.*]

La. Min. False man!—I had as lieve a toad touch'd me. —

[*Aside.*]

L. Min. She gives me the frissonne.—I must propose to stay, or I shall never get rid of her. [*Aside.*]—I am quite aguish to-night,—he—he—Do, my dear, let us make a little fire here, and make a family *tete-a-tete*, by way of novelty.

[*Rings a bell.*]

Enter

Enter Jeffamy.

Let 'em take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

La. Min. What shall I do! [*Aside.*—Here, Jeffamy, there is no occasion—I am going to my own chamber, and my Lord won't stay here by himself.

[*Exit Jeffamy.*

L. Min. How cruel is it, lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleasure of a domestic duetto.—A good escape, faith! [*Aside.*

La. Min. I have too much regard for lord Minikin, to agree to any thing that would afford him so little pleasure—I shall retire to my own apartment.

L. Min. Well, if your Ladyship will be cruel, I must still, like the miser, starve and sigh, tho' possessed of the greatest treasure.—[*Bows.*—I wish your Ladyship a good night—

[*He takes one candle, and she takes the other.*

May I presume—

[*Salutes her.*

La. Min. Your Lordship is too obliging.—Nasty man!

[*Aside.*

L. Min. Disagreeable woman!

[*Aside.*

[*They wipe their lips, and exeunt ceremoniously.*

Miss Tit. [*peeping out at the closet.*] All's silent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here I cannot guess—I long to be reliev'd, I wish my Lord was come—But I hear a noise.

[*She shuts the door.*

Col. Fivy. [*peeping over the chimney-board.*] I wonder my Lady does not come.—I would not have Miss Tittup know of this—'twou'd be ten thousand pounds out of my way, and I can't afford to give so much for a little gallantry.

Miss Tit. [*comes forward.*] What would my Colonel say to find his bride, that is to be, in this critical situation.

Enter Lord Minikin, at one door, in the dark.

L. Min. Now to relieve my prisoner.

[*Comes forward.*

Enter Lady Minikin, at the other door.

La. Min. My poor Colonel will be as miserable as if he were besieg'd in garrison; I must release him.

[*Going towards the chimney.*

L.

L. Min. Hift—hif!—

Miss Tit. La. Min. and Col. Tivy. Here, here!—

L. Min. This way.

La. Min. Softly.

[*They all grope about, till Lord Minikin has got Lady Minikin, and the Colonel Miss Tittup.*]

Sir John. [*speaking without.*] Light this way, I say; I am sure there are thieves, get a blunderbuss.

Jes. Indeed you dreamt it; there is nobody but the family. [*All stand and stare.*]

Enter Sir John in his cap, and hanger drawn, with Jessamy.

Sir John. Give me the candle, I'll ferret 'em out, I warrant; bring a blunderbuss, I say; they have been skipping about that gallery in the dark this half hour; there must be mischief—I have watch'd 'em into this room—Ho, ho, are you there?—If you stir, you are dead men—[*They retire.*—and [*seeing the ladies*] women too!—Egad—ha! What's this? the same party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatch'd in this righteous town.—You'll excuse me, cousins! [*They all look confounded.*]

L. Min. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about?

Sir John. Well, but hark'ee, my dear cousins, have you not got wrong partners?—Here has been some mistake in the dark; I am mighty glad that I have brought you a candle to set you all to rights again.—You'll excuse me, gentlemen and ladies!

Enter Gymp, with a candle.

Gymp. What, in the name of mercy, is the matter?

Sir John. Why the old matter, and the old game, Mrs Gymp; and I'll match my cousins here at it against all the world; and I say done first.

L. Min. What is the meaning, Sir John, of all this tumult and consternation? May not Lady Minikin and I, and the Colonel and your niece, be seen in my house together without your raising the family, and making this uproar and confusion?

Sir John. Come, come, good folks, I see you are all confounded; I'll settle this matter in a moment.—As for you,

you, Colonel—tho' you have not deserv'd plain-dealing from me, I will now be serious—you may imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me—'tis a mistake, she has no expectations from me; if she marry you, and I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. Tivy. Plain-dealing is a jewel; and to show you, Sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely oblig'd to you for your intelligence; and I am, ladies, your most obedient humble servant—I shall see you, my Lord, at the club to-morrow?— [*Exit Col. Tivy.*]

L. Min. Sans doute, mon cher Colonel.—I'll meet you there without fail.

Sir John. My Lord, you'll have something else to do.

L. Min. Indeed! what is that, good Sir John?

Sir John. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told, what you have always turn'd a deaf ear to, that the dissipation of your fortune and morals must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance.—As you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

L. Min. The bumkin is no fool, and is damn'd satirical—

[*Aside*]

Sir John. This kind of quarantime for pestilential minds, will bring you to your senses, and make you renounce foreign vices and follies, and return with joy to your country and property again.—Read that, my Lord and know your fate.

[*Gives a paper*]

L. Min. What an abomination this is! that a man of fashion, and a nobleman, should be oblig'd to submit to the laws of his country.

Sir John. Thank heaven, my Lord, we are in the country!—You are silent, ladies?—If repentance has subdu'd your tongues, I shall have hopes of you—a little country air might perhaps do well—as you are distress'd I am at your service.—What say you, my Lady?

L. Min. However appearances have condemn'd me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate—
your

your kindness and example may restore me to my former natural English constitution.

Sir John. Will you resign your lady to me, my Lord, for a time?

L. Min. For ever, dear Sir John, without a murmur.

Sir John. Well, Miss, and what say you?

Miss Tit. Guilty, uncle.

[*Curtseying.*]

Sir John. Guilty! the devil you are? of what?

Miss Tit. Of consenting to marry one whom my heart could not approve; and coquetting with another, which friendship, duty, honour, morals, and every thing but fashion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir John. Thus then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the mistress of another under this, I sally forth a knight-errant, to rescue distress'd damsels from those monsters, foreign vices and *bon ton*, as they call it; and I trust that every English hand and heart here will assist me in so desperate an undertaking.—You'll excuse me, Sirs!

COMUS.

C O M U S

A

M A S Q U E.

Altered from MILTON.

IN TWO ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

	Covent-Garden.	Edinburgh.
Comus, -	Mr Mattocks.	Mr Davie
First Spirit, -	Mr Hull.	Mr Spark
Elder Brother, -	Mr Whitefield.	Mr Simpf
Younger Brother, -	Mr Robson.	Mr Banks
Bacchanals, -	} Mr Reinhold.	Mr Hallio
Second Spirit, -		Mr Kelly,
	Mr L'Estrange.	

W O M E N.

Lady, - - -	Mrs Jackson.	Mrs Woo
Euphrosyne, - -	Miss Catley.	Mrs Jacks
Bacchants, - - -	} Miss Dayes.	Mrs Mills
		Mrs Moun
Sabrina and Pastoral Nymph,	Miss Ambrose, &c.	Mrs Hend
	Miss Brown.	

A C T I.

SCENE, *A Wood.*

Comus enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his in the other; with him a rout of men and women, as Bacchanals: they come in making a riotous and noisy noise, with torches in their hands.

COMUS speaks.

THE star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold,

the gilded car of day
 golden axle doth allay
 the steep Atlantic stream ;
 the slope sun his upward beam
 sets against the dusky pole,
 and toward the other goal
 his chamber in the east :
 awhile welcome joy and feast.

S O N G.

Now Phoebus sinketh in the west.
 Welcome song, and welcome jest,
 Midnight-shout and revelry,
 Tipfy dance and jollity ;
 Braid your locks with rosy twine,
 Dropping odours, dropping wine.
 Rigour now is gone to bed,
 And Advice with scrup'lous head,
 Strict Age and sour Severity,
 With their grave saws in slumber lie.

mus. We that are of purer fire,
 ate the starry choir,
 in their nightly watchful spheres
 in swift round the months and years.
 sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
 to the moon in wav'ring morrice move;
 on the tawny sands and shelves
 the pert fairies and the dapper elves.

S O N G. *By a Woman.*

By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
 The wood-nymph, deck'd with daisies trim,
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep :
 What has night to do with sleep ?
 Night has better sweets to prove ;
 Venus now wakes, and wakens Love :
 Come, let us our rites begin :
 'Tis only day-light that makes sin.

mus. Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
 half-veil'd Cocytto, t' whom the secret flame
 midnight-torches burns ; mysterious dame,
 Vol. IV. T

That

That ne'er art call'd but when the dragon-womb
 Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
 And makes one blot of all the air,
 Stay thy cloudy ebony chair,
 Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
 Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out ;
 Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
 The nice Morn on th' Indian steep
 From her cabin loop-hole peep,
 And to the tell-tale Sun descry
 Our conceal'd solemnity.

S O N G. *By Comus and a Woman.*

From tyrant laws and customs free,
 We follow sweet variety ;
 By turns we drink, and dance, and sing,
 Love for ever on the wing.
 Why should niggard rules controul
 Transports of the jovial soul ?
 No dull stinting hour we own :
 Pleasure counts our time alone.

Comus. Break off, break off, I feel the different
 Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
 Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees ;
 Our number may affright : some virgin sure
 (Far so I can distinguish by mine art)
 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
 And to my wily trains. I shall ere long
 Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
 About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
 My dazzling spells into the spungy air,
 Of pow'r to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
 And put the damsel to suspicious flight ;
 Which must not be, for that's against my course.
 I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
 And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy,
 Baited with reasons not unpalatable,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
 And hug him into snares. When once her eye

ath met the virtue of this magic duft,
 Shall appear some harmlefs villager,
 Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
 ut here ſhe comes; I fairly ſtep aſide,
 and hearken if I may her buſineſs hear.

Enter the Lady.

Lady. This way the noiſe was, if mine ear be true,
 My beſt guide now; methought it was the ſound
 of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
 I ſhould be loth

to meet the rudeneſs and ſwill'd inſolence
 of ſuch late rioters; yet, oh, where elſe
 ſhall I inform my unacquainted feet
 the blind mazes of this tangled wood?

Comus. [*Aſide.*] I'll eaſe her of that care, and be her
 guide.

Lady. My brothers, when they ſaw me weary'd out,
 oppreſs'd, as they ſaid, to the next thicket ſide,
 bring me berries of ſuch cooling fruit
 as the kind hofpitable woods provide.
 it where they are, and why they come not back,
 now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliſt
 they had engag'd their wand'ring ſteps too far.
 cannot halloo to my brothers, but
 ſuch noiſe as I can make to be heard fartheſt
 I venture; for my new-enliven'd ſpirits
 prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

S O N G.

weet Echo, ſweeteſt nymph, that liv'ſt unſeen

Within thy airy cell,
 My ſlow Mæander's margent green,

And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale

Nightly to thee her ſad ſong mourneth well,
 canſt thou not tell me of a gentle pair,
 what likeſt thy Narciffus are?

Oh, if thou have
 hid them in ſome flow'ry cave,

Tell me but where,
 ſweet queen of parly, daughter of the ſphere;
 ſo may'ſt thou be tranſlated to the ſkies,
 and give reſounding grace to all heaven's harmonies.

Comus, [*aside*.] Can any mortal mixture of earth
mould

Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment ?

I'll speak to her,

And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder,

Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,

Unless the goddess that in rural shrine

Dwell'ft here with Pan or Silvan, by blest'd song

Forbidding ev'ry bleak unkindly fog

To touch the prosp'rous growth of this tall wood.

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise

That is address'd to unattending ears :

Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift

How to regain my sever'd company,

Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo

To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus

Lady. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near-ush'ring
guides ?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf,
To seek i'th'valley some cool friendly spring.

Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, lady ?

Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick re-
turn.

Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need ?

Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Comus. Were they of manly prime or youthful bloom

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Comus. Two such I saw, under a mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots ;
Their port was more than human : if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heav'n,
To help you find them.

Lady. Gentler villager,

What readiest way would bring me to that place ?

Comus. I know each lane, and ev'ry alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood :
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know

Ere morrow wake; or grant it otherwise,
I can conduct you, lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till farther quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy offer'd service. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, blest'd Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength——Shepherd, lead on.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Comus's Crew from behind the trees.

S O N G. *By a Man.*

Fly swiftly, ye minutes, till Comus receive
The nameless soft transports that beauty can give;
The bowl's frolic joys let him teach her to prove,
And she in return yield the raptures of love.
Without love and wine, wit and beauty are vain,
All grandeur insipid, and riches a pain;
The most splendid palace grows dark as the grave:
Love and wine give, ye gods! or take back what you gave.

C H O R U S.

Away, away, away,
To Comus' court repair;
There night outshines the day,
There yields the melting fair.

[*A halloo heard.*]

Enter the two Brothers.

E. Bro. —— Lift, lift; I hear
Some far-off halloo break the silent air.

T. Bro. Methought so too: what should it be?

E. Bro. Either some one like us night-founder'd here;
Or else some neighbour woodman; or at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

T. Bro. Heav'n keep my sister. Again! again! and
near!

Best draw and stand upon our guard.

E. Bro. I'll halloo;

If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and heav'n be for us.

Enter the first Spirit, habited like a shepherd

Y. Bro. That halloo I should know—What :
Speak.

Spir. What voice is that? My young lord? Spea

Y. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd,

Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next
Where is my virgin lady? where is she?

How chance she is not in your company?

E. Bro. To tell thee sadly, shepherd, without
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spir. Ah, me! unhappy! then my fears are

E. Bro. What fears, good Thyrsis? prithe
shew.

Spir. Within the bosom of this hideous wood
Immur'd in cypress shades, a forcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus;
Deep-skill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
And wanton as his father.

This have I learnt tending my flock hard by;
Whence night by night he and his monstrous
heard to howl.

Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
T' inveigle and invite th' unwary sense.
But hark! the beaten timbrel's jarring-sound
And wild tumultuous mirth proclaim their presence
Onward! they move; and this way guides their
Let us withdraw a while. [Th

*Enter Comus's Crew revelling, and by turns care
other, till they observe the two Brothers; then
Brother advances and speaks.*

E. Bro. What are you? speak! that thus in
riot

And midnight revelry, like drunken Bacchanal
Invade the silence of these lonely shades?

Wom. Ye godlike youths,

Bless the propitious star that led you to us;
We are the happiest of the race of mortals;
Of freedom, mirth, and joy, the only heirs:
But you shall share them with us; for this cup,
This nectar'd cup, the sweet assurance gives
Of present, and the pledge of future bliss.

[She offers 'em the cup, which they boi
S

S O N G. *By a Man.*

By the gaily circling glass,
 We can see how minutes pass;
 By the hollow cask are told
 How the waining night grows old.
 Soon, too soon, the busy day
 Drives us from our sport and play.
 What have we with day to do?
 Sons of care, 'twas made for you.

E. Bro. Forbear, nor offer us the poison'd sweets.

Wom. Oh! how unseemly shows in blooming youth
 Such grey severity!—But come with us,
 We to the bow'r of bliss will guide your steps.

S O N G. *By a Woman in a pastoral habit.*

Would you taste the noon-tide air?
 To yon fragrant bower repair,
 Where, woven with the poplar bough,
 The mantling vine will shelter you.
 Down each side a fountain flows;
 Tinkling, murmuring, as it goes,
 Lightly o'er the mossy ground;
 Sultry Phœbus scorching round.
 Round, the languid herds and sheep
 Stretch'd o'er sunny hillock sleep,
 While on the hyacinth and rose
 The fair does all alone repose.
 All alone———and in her arms
 Your breast may beat to Love's alarms;
 Till blest'd, and blessing, you shall own
 The joys of Love are joys alone.

Y. Bro. How low sinks beauty, when by vice debas'd!
 How fair that form, if virtue dwelt within!
 But, from this shameless advocate of shame,
 To me the warbled song harsh discord grates.

Wom. No more; these formal maxims misbecome you;
 They only suit suspicious shrivell'd age.

S O N G. *By a Man and two Women.*

Live, and love, enjoy the fair,
 Banish sorrow, banish care;
 Mind not what old dotards say,

Age has had his share of play;
 But youth's sport begins to-day.
 From the fruits of sweet delight
 Let not scare-crow virtue fright.
 Here in pleasure's vineyard we
 Rove, like birds, from tree to tree,
 Careless, airy, gay, and free.

E. Bro. How can your impious tongues profane the
 name

Of sacred virtue, and yet promise pleasure
 In lying songs of vanity and vice?
 From virtue sever'd, pleasure phrenzy grows,
 And always flies at reason's cool return.
 But we forget: who hears the voice of truth,
 In noisy riot and intemp'rance drown'd?
 Thyrsis be then our guide! we'll follow thee,
 And some good angel bear a shield before us!

[*Exeunt Brothers and Spirit*]

1 Wom. Come, come, my friends, and partners of my
 joys,

Leave to these pedant youths their bookish dreams;
 A beardless Cynic is the shame of nature,
 Beyond the cure of this inspiring cup;
 Away, nor waste a moment more about 'em.

Chorus. Away, away, away,
 To Comus' court repair;
 There night outshines the day,
 There yields the melting fair.

[*Exeunt singing*]

A C T II.

*SCENE opens, and discovers a magnificent Hall in Comus
 palace. Comus and attendants stand on each side of the
 Lady, who is seated in an enchanted chair.*

Comus speaks.

COME, thou goddess fair and free,
 In heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne;
 Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
 Jest and youthful jollity,
 Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
 Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles,

Such as hang on Hebe's cheek;
 And love to live in dimple sleek;
 Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it as you go,
 On the light fantastic toe;
 And in thy right-hand lead with thee
 The moutain-nymph, sweet Liberty.

[Whilst these lines are repeating, enter a Nymph representing Euphrosyne, or Mirth; who advances to the Lady, and sings the following song.]

S O N G.

Come, come, bid adieu to fear;
 Love and harmony live here.
 No domestic jealous jars,
 Buzzing slanders, wordy wars,
 In my presence will appear;
 Love and harmony reign here.
 Sighs to amorous sighs returning,
 Pulses beating, bosoms burning,
 Bosoms with warm wishes panting,
 Words to speak those wishes wanting,
 Are the only tumults here,
 All the woes you need to fear:
 Love and harmony reign here.

Lady. How long must I, by magic fetters chain'd
 To this detested feat, hear odious strains
 Of shameless folly, which my soul abhors?

Comus. Now softly slow let Lydian measures move,
 And breathe the pleasing pangs of gentle love.

[The pastoral Nymph advances slowly, with a melancholy and desponding air, to the side of the stage, and repeats, by way of soliloquy, the first six lines, and then sings the ballad. In the mean time she is observed by Euphrosyne, who by her gesture expresses to the audience her different sentiments of the subject of her complaint, suitably to the character of their several songs.]

R E C I T A T I V E.

How gentle was my Damon's air!
 Like sunny beams his golden hair;

His

His voice was like the nightingale's ;
 More sweet his breath than flow'ry vales.
 How hard such beauties to resign!
 And yet that cruel task is mine!

B A L L A D.

On every hill, in every grove,
 Along the margin of each stream,
 Dear conscious scenes of former love,
 I mourn, and Dámon is my theme.
 The hills, the groves, the streams remain,
 But Damon there I seek in vain.
 From hill, from dale, each-charm is fled;
 Groves, flocks, and fountains, please no more
 Each flow'r in pity droops its head,
 All nature does my loss deplore.
 All, all reproach the faithless swain,
 Yet Damon still I seek in vain.

R E C I T A T I V E. *By Euphrasynt.*

Love, the greatest bliss below,
 How to taste few women know;
 Fewer still the way have hit
 How a fickle swain to quit.
 Simple nymphs, then learn of me,
 How to treat inconstancy.

B A L L A D.

The wanton god, that pierces hearts,
 Dips in gall his pointed darts;
 But the nymph disdains to pine,
 Who bathes the wound with rosy wine.
 Farewel lovers, when they're cloy'd;
 If I am scorn'd because enjoy'd,
 Sure the squeamish fops are free
 To rid me of dull company.
 They have charms whilst mine can please;
 I love them much, but more my ease;
 Nor jealous fears my love molest,
 Nor faithless vows shall break my rest.
 Why should they e'er give me pain,
 Who to give me joy disdain?
 All I hope of mortal man,
 Is to love me whilst he can.

Comus. Why are you vex'd, lady? why do you frown?
 Here dwell no frowns nor anger; from these gates
 Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
 Than fancy can beget on youthful thoughts.
 And first behold this cordial julep here,
 That flames and dances in his crystal bounds.

Lady. Know, base deluder, that I will not taste it.
 Keep thy detested gifts for such as these.

[*Points to his crew.*]

Comus. Why shou'd you be so cruel to yourself,
 And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
 For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
 That have been tir'd all day without repast,
 And timely rest have wanted. But, fair virgin,
 This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
 'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
 That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
 Was this the cottage and the safe abode
 Thou told'st me of? Hence with thy brew'd enchant-
 ments.

Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
 I wou'd not taste thy treas'rous offer—None,
 But such as are good men, can give good things;
 And that which is not good is not delicious
 To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.
 Shall I go on? or have I said enough?

Comus. Enough to show
 That you are cheated by the lying boasts
 Of starving pedants, that affect a fame
 From scorning pleasures which they cannot reach.

*Euphrosyne sings *.*
 Preach not to me your musty rules,
 Ye drones that mould in idle cell;
 The heart is wiser than the schools,
 The senses always reason well.
 If short my span, I less can spare
 To pass a single pleasure by;
 An hour is long, if lost in care;
 They only live who life enjoy.

Comus.

* Sung by Comus, as now performed at Covent-garden theatre.

Comus. Lill, lady; be not coy, and be not cox
 With that same vaunted name virginity.
 What need a vermeil tinctur'd lip for that,
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
 There was another meaning in these gifts;
 Think what, and be advis'd: you are but young;
 This will inform you soon.
 One sip of this will bathe the drooping spirits in de
 Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

*[The Brothers rush in with swords drawn,
 the glass out of his hand, and break it again
 ground; his Rout make signs of resistance, but
 all driven off.]*

Enter the first Spirit.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
 O, ye mistook, you should have snatch'd his wand
 And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
 We cannot free the lady, that sits here
 In stony fetters fix'd and motionless.
 Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I bethink me.
 There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
 Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
 That sways the Severn stream; she can unlock
 The clasp'ing charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
 If she be right invoc'd.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave;
 Listen for dear honour's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake,
 Listen and save.

Sabrina rises and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,
 Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
 My sliding chariot stays,
 Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
 Of turkis blue and em'rald green,
 That in the channel strays.
 Gentle swain, at thy request,
 I am here.

First Spirit.

Goddeſs dear,
 We implore thy powerful hand
 To undo the charmed band
 Of true virgin here diſtreſs'd,
 Thro' the force and thro' the wile
 Of unbleſs'd enchanter vile.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Sub. Shepherd, 'tis my office beſt
 To help enſnared chaſtity.
 Brighteſt lady, look on me:
 Thus I ſprinkle on thy breaſt
 Drops, that from the fountain pure
 I have kept, of precious cure;
 Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
 Thrice upon thy ruby'd lip:
 Next this marble venom'd ſeat,
 Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
 I touch with chaſte palms moiſt and cold:
 Now the ſpell hath loſt his hold;
 And I muſt haſte, ere morning-hour,
 To wait in Amphiſtrite's bower.
*[Sabrina deſcends, and the Lady riſes out of her ſeat;
 the Brothers embrace her tenderly.]*

Y. Bro. Why did I doubt? Why tempt the wrath of heav'n

To ſhed juſt vengeance on my weak diſtruſt?

E. Bro. The freedom of the mind, you ſee, no charm,
 No ſpell, can reach; that righteous Jove forbids,
 Left man ſhould call his frail divinity
 The ſlave of evil or the ſport of chance.
 Inform us, Thyriſis, if for this thine aid
 We aught can pay that equals thy deſert.

First Spirit diſcovering himſelf.

Pay it to heaven! There my manſion is:
 But when a mortal, favour'd of high Jove,
 Chances to paſs thro' yon advent'rous glade,
 Swift as the ſparkle of a glancing ſtar
 I ſhoot from heav'n to give him ſafe convoy.
 Now my taſk is ſmoothly done,

I can fly or I can run,

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U

Quickly

Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free:
She can teach you how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

THE ORATORS.

IN THREE ACTS.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	<i>Hay-Market, 1762.</i>	<i>1767.</i>
<i>Lecturer,</i>	Mr Foote.	Mr Foote.
	Mr Weston.	Mr Weston.
	Mr M'George.	Mr Pynn.
	Mr Quin.	Mr Quick.
	Mr Bannister.	Mr Bannister.
	Mr Williams.	Mr Davis.
	Mr Young.	Mr Loveman.
<i>Pupils,</i>	Mr Booth.	Mr Castle.
	Mr Palmer.	Mr Palmer.
	Mr Kickill.	Mr Strange.
	Mr Somers.	Mr Smith.
	Mr Pearce.	Mr Pearce.
		Mr Keen.
		Mr Gardiner.
		Mr Newton.
		Mr Shuter.

ACT I.

*Enter WILL TIREHACK and HARRY SCAMPER, booted,
with whips in their hands, into a side-box.*

SCAMPER.

PSHA! zounds! prithee, Will, let us go; what signifies our staying here?

Tire. Nay, but tarry a little; besides, you know we promis'd to give Poll Bayliss and Bett Skinner the meeting.

U 3

Scam.

Scam. Why then, stay and enjoy it yourself;
Step to the Bull and Gate, and call upon Jer-
Latin and my horse. We shall see you at three.

Tire. Nay, but, prithee, stay.

Scam. Rot me if I do. [*Going out*]

Tire. Halloo, Harry; Harry—

Scam. Well, what's the matter now? [*Enter*]

Tire. Here's Poll Bayliss just come into the

Scam. No——

Tire. She is, by——

Scam. [*looking.*] Yes, faith! it is she, sure!
How goes it, Poll?

Tire. Well, now, we shall have you, I hope

Scam. Ay, if I thought we should get any

Tire. I'll make an inquiry. Halloo! snuff
fers?

Candle-snuffer. Your pleasure, Sir?

Tire. What is all this business about here?

Snuf. Can't say, Sir.

Scam. Well, but you could if you would, I
the secret.

Snuf. Not I, upon my honour!

scheme from Oxford; and because cash begins to run low—How much have you, Will?

Tire. Three-and-twenty shillings, besides the crown I paid at the door.

Scam. And I eighteen. Now, as this will last us but to-night, we are willing to husband our time; let us see, Will, how are we engag'd?

Tire. Why at three, with Bett and Poll, there, at the Shakespeare: after that to the Coronation; for you know we have seen it but nine times—

Scam. And then back to the Shakespeare again; where we sup, and take horse at the door.

Tire. So there's no time to be lost, you see: we desire, therefore, to know what sort of a thing this affair here of your's is? What, is it damn'd funny and comical?

Foots. Have you not seen the bills?

Scam. What, about the lectures! ay, but that's all slang, I suppose; no, no. No tricks upon travellers; no; we know better—What, are there any more of you; or do you do it all yourself?

Foots. If I was in want of comedians, you, gentlemen, are kind enough to lend me a lift; but, upon my word, my intentions, as the bill will inform you, are serious—

Tire. Are they? then I'll have my money again. What, do you think we come to London to learn any thing?—Come, Will.

Foots. Hold, gentlemen, I would detain you, if possible. What is it you expect? [Going.]

Scam. To be jolly, and laugh, to be sure—

Foots. At what?

Tire. At what—damme, I don't know—at you, and your frolics and fancies—

Foots. If that is all you desire; why, perhaps we shan't disappoint you—

Scam. Shan't you—why, that is an honest fellow—come, begin—

Foots. But you'll be so kind as not to interrupt me?

Scam. Never fear—

Foots. Ladies and gentlemen—

[Suds from the opposite box calls to Foots, and stops him short.]

Suds. Stop a minute; may I be permitted to speak?

Foots. Doubtless, Sir—

Suds. Why, the affair is this. My wife Alice—for you must know my name is Ephraim Suds, I am a soap-boiler in the city,—took it into her head, and nothing would serve her turn but that I must be a common-council man this year; for, says Alice, says she, it is the onliest way to rise in the world.

Foots. A just observation—you succeeded?

Suds. Oh! there was no danger of that—yes, yes, I got it all hollow; but now to come to the marrow of the business. Well, Alice, says I, now I am chosen, what's next to be done? “Why now, says Alice, says she, thee must learn to make speeches; why dost not see what purferment neighbour Grogam has got; why man, 'tis all brought about by his speechifying. I tell thee what, Ephraim, if thou canst but once learn to lay down the law, there's no knowing to what thee may'st rise—”

Foots. Your lady had reason.

Suds. Why, I thought so too; and, as good luck would have it, who should come into the city, in the very nick of time, but master professor along with his lectures—Adod, away, in a hurry, Alice and I danced to Pewterer's Hall.

Foots. You improv'd, I hope?

Suds. O Lud! it is unknown what knowledge we got! We can read—Oh! we never stop to spell a word now—And then he told us such things about verbs, and nouns, and adverbs, that never entered our heads before, and emphasis, and accent; heav'n bless us, I did not think there had been such things in the world.

Foots. And have you speechify'd yet?

Suds. Soft; soft and fair; we must walk before we can run—I think I have laid a pretty foundation. The Mansion-house was not built in a day, Master Foots. But to go on with my tale, my dame one day looking over the papers, came running to me; now, Ephraim, says she, thy business is done; rare news, lad; here is a man at the other end of the town that will make thee a speaker at once, and out she pull'd your proposals. Ah, Alice, says I, thee be'st but a fool; why, I know that

man, he is all upon his fun; he lecture!—why, 'tis all but a bam—Well, 'tis but seeing, says she; so, wolens nolens, she would have me come hither: now if so be you be serious, I shall think my money wisely bestow'd; but if it be only your comical works, I can tell you, you shall see me no more.

Foote. Sir, I should be extremely sorry to lose you, if I knew but what would content you?

Suds. Why, I want to be made an orator on; and to speak speeches, as I tell you, at our meetings, about politics, and peace, and addressee, and the new bridge, and all them kind of things.

Foote. Why, with your happy talents I should think much might be done.

Suds. I am proud to hear you say so, indeed I am. I did speechify once at a vestry concerning new-lettering the church-buckets, and came off cutely enough; and, to say the truth, that was the thing that provok'd me to go to Pewterer's Hall.

[Sits down again.]

Foote. Well, Sir, I flatter myself, that in proportion to the difference of abilities in your two instructors, you will here make a tolerable progress. But now, Sir, with your favour, we will proceed to explain the nature of our design; and I hope, in the process, you, gentlemen, will find entertainment, and you, Sir, information.

Mr Foote then proceeds in his lecture.

My plan, gentlemen, is to be consider'd as a superstructure on that admirable foundation laid by the modern professor of English, both our labours tending to the same general end, the perfectioning of our countrymen in a most essential article, the right use of their native language. The English orators are to be divided into four distinct classes, the pulpit, the senate, the bar, and the stage: with the first of these branches, the pulpit, I shan't interfere; and, indeed, so few people now of consequence and consideration frequent the churches, that the art is scarce with cultivation. The bar—

Scam. Psha! there's enough of this dull profling; come, give us a little of something that's funny; you talk'd about pupils. Could not we see them?

Foote. Rather too precipitate, Sir; but, however, in some measure to satisfy you, and demonstrate the success

of our scheme; give me leave to introduce to you a most extraordinary instance, in the person of a young Highlander. It is not altogether a year since this astonishing subject spoke nothing but Erse. Encourag'd by the prodigies of my brother professor's skill, whose fame, like the Chevalier Taylor's, pierces the remotest regions, his relations were tempted to send this young genius to Edinburgh; where he went through a regular course of the professor's lectures, to finish his studies; he has been about six weeks under my care, and, considering the time, I think you will be amaz'd at his progress. Donald?—

Enter Donald.

Don. What's yer wull, Sir?

Foote. Will you give these ladies and gentlemen a proof of your skill?

Don. Ah, ye wad ha' a specimen of my oratorical art?

Foote. If you please.

Don. In gude troth on ye sal; wol ye gi me a topic?

Foote. O, choose for yourself.

Don. It's aw one to Donald.

Foote. What think you of a short panegyrick on the science we are treating of?

Don. On oratory? Wi'aw my heart.

Foote. Mind your action; let that accompany your words—

Don. Dunna heed, man—The topic I presume to haundle, is the miraculous gifts of an orator, wha, by the bare power of his words, leads men, women, and bairns as he lists—

Scam. And who?

Don. [*tartly.*] Men, women, and bairns.

Scam. Bairns! who are they?

Foote. Oh, children—his meaning is obvious enough.

Don. Ay, ay; men, women, and bairns, wherever he lists. And first for the antiquity of the art—Ken ye, my lads, wha was the first orator?—Mayhap, ye think it was Tully the Latinist? ye are wide o' the mark: Or Demosthenes the Greek? in gude troth, ye're as far aff as before—Wha was it, then? It was e'en that arch chiel, the Deevil himsel—

Scam.

Scam. [*hastily.*] The devil it was ; how do you prove that?

Don. Guds zounds, mon, ye brake the thrid of my harang ; an ye'll but had your tongue, I'se prove it as plain as a pike-staff.

Tire. Be quiet, Will, and let him go on.

Don. I say it was that arch chiel, the Deevil himsel. Ye ken weel, my lads, how Adam and Eve were planted in Eden, wi plenty o' bannocks and kail, and aw that they wished, but were prohibited the eating of pepins——

Scam. Apples——

Don. Weel, weel, and are na pepins and apples aw the same thing?

Footc. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hear him out. Go on with your pepins.——

Don. Prohibited the eating of pepins ; upon which, what does me the orator Satan, but he whispers a fast speech in her lug ; egad our grannum fell to in an instant, and eat a pepin without staying to pare it——[*Addresses himself to the Oxonians.*] Ken ye, lads, wha was the first orator, now?

Tire. [*to Scamper.*] What say you to that?

Scam. By my foul, the fellow's right——

Don. Ay, but ye wan'na ha' patience——ye wan'na ha' patience, lads——

Tire. Hold your jaw, and go on——

Don. Now, we come to the definition of an orator : and it is from the Latin words, *oro, orare*, to intreat, or perswad ; and how? by the means o' elocution or argument, which argument consists o' letters, which letters join'd mak syllables, which syllables compounded mak words, which words combin'd mak sentences or periods, or which aw together mak an orator ; so the first gift of an orator is words——

Scam. Here, Donald, you are out.

Don. How so?

Scam. Words the first gift of an orator! No, Donald, no, at school I learn'd better than that: Do'st not remember, Will, what is the first perfection of an orator? action ; the second, action ; the third, action.

Tire.

Scam. Oh, never mind them—proceed.

Don. In gude troth, I've not say ane word ma

Foot. Finish, finish, Donald.—

Don. Ah! they have jumbled aw my ideas
ther; but an they wall enter into a fair argumen
I've convince 'em that Donald Macgregor is mare
match.—

Scam. You be——

Don. Very weel——

Foot. Nay, but my dear Donald——

Don. Hands aff, Maister Foot— I ha' finis
fale, the De'el a word mare sal ye get out o' Do
yer servant, Sir.

Foot. You see, gentlemen, what your impatie
lost us.

Scam. Rot him, let him go. But is this fellow
your pupils? why, what a damnable twang he h
with his men, women, and bairns——

Foot. His pronunciation is, I own, a little irr
but then consider he is but merely a novice: why
in his present condition, he makes no bad figure
five minutes at the Pantheon and Lycæum; ar
month or two we shan't be asham'd to start hi

A C T II.

SCENE, *A Hall of Justice.**Enter FOOTE.*

THE first species of oratory we are to demonstrate our skill in, is that of the bar ; and, in order to give our lecture an air of reality, you are to suppose this a court of justice, furnish'd with proper ministers to discharge the necessary functions. But to supply these gentlemen with business, we must likewise institute an imaginary cause ; and, that the whole may be ideal, let it be the prosecution of an imaginary being ; I mean the phantom of Cock-lane, a phenomenon that has much puzzled the brains and terrified the minds of many of our fellow-subjects.

You are to consider, ladies and gentlemen, that the language of the bar is a species of oratory distinct from every other. It has been observ'd, that the ornaments of this profession have not shone with equal lustre in an assembly near their own hall ; the reason assign'd, tho' a pleasant, is not the true one. It has been hinted, that these gentlemen were in want of their briefs. But, were that the disease, the remedy would be easy enough : they need only have recourse to the artifice successfully practis'd by some of their colleagues ; instead of having their briefs in their hands, to hide them at the bottom of their hats.

[Calls to his pupils, who enter dress'd as a justice, a clerk, a serjeant at law, and a counsellor.]

You will remember, gentlemen, your proper pauses, repetitions, hums, ha's, and interjections : now seat yourselves, and you the counsel remember to be mighty dull, and you the justices to fall asleep. I must prepare to appear in this cause as a witness. *[Exit.]*

Jus. Clerk, read the indictment.

Cler. *[reads.]* Middlesex, to wit.

Fanny Phantom, you are indicted, That on or before the first day of January 1762, you the said Fanny did, in a certain house, in a certain street call'd *Cock-lane*, in the county of Middlesex, maliciously, treacherously,

cherously, wickedly, and wilfully, by certain thumps, knockings, scratchings, and flutterings, against doors, walls, wainscots, bedsteads, and bed-posts flurb, annoy, assault, and terrify divers innocent, sensible, harmless, quiet, simple people, residing in or about the said Cock-lane, and elsewhere in the said county of Middlesex, to the great prejudice of said people in said county. How say you guilty, or—

Coun. [*Stops the Clerk short.*] May it please your ship—hem—I am counsel in this cause for the ghost—hem—and before I can permit her to plead, I have objection to make, that is—hem—I shall object pleading at all.—hem—It is the standing law of the country—hem—and has—hem—always been so all deemed, and practised, that—hem—all criminals should be tried *per pares*, by their equals—hem—that is—by a jury of equal rank with themselves. Now, be the case, as the case it is, I—hem—I should be to know how my client can be tried in this manner. And first, who is my client? She is in the indictment call'd a phantom, a ghost. What is a ghost spirit. What is a spirit? a spirit is a thing that independently of, and is superior to, flesh and blood. And can any man go so far to think, that I can advise my client to submit to be tried by people of an inferior rank to herself? certainly no—I therefore humbly move to quash this indictment, unless a jury of ghosts be first obtained; unless a jury of ghosts be first had and returned.

[*Sits*]

Serj. I am in this cause counsel against Fanny [the ghost]—eh,—and notwithstanding the rule made down by Mr. Prosequi be—eh—right in the main here it can't avail his client a whit. We allow—we do allow, please your worship, that Fanny Phantom—eh—had originally a right to a jury of ghosts; but—eh—if she did, by any act of her own she forfeit this right, her plea cannot be admitted. We can prove, please your worship, prove by a clear witness, that said Fanny did, as specified in the indictment, scratch, knock, and flutter—eh—said scratchings, knockings, and flutterings—eh—

operations, merely peculiar to flesh, blood, and body—
 b—we do humbly apprehend——ch——that by conde-
 scending to execute the aforesaid operations, she has
 rav'd her privilege as a ghost, and may be try'd in the
 ordinary form, according to the statute so made and pro-
 vided in the reign of, &c. &c. &c.

Your worship's opinion.

Tire. Smoke the justice, he is as fast as a church.

Scam. I fancy he has touch'd the tankard too much
 his morning; he'll know a good deal of what they have
 een saying.

Just. [*is wak'd by the clerk, who tells him they have
 loaded.*] Why the objection——oh——brought by
 Mr Prosequi, is [*whispers the clerk*] doubtless provision-
 ally a valid objection; but then, if the culprit has, by an
 act of her own, defeated her privilege, as asserted in Mr
 Serjeant's replication: we conceive she may be legally
 try'd——oh——Besides——oh——Besides, I, I, I can't well
 see how we could impanel a jury of ghosts; or——oh——
 how twelve spirits, who have no body at all, can be said
 to take a corporal oath, as requir'd by law——unless, in-
 deed, as in case of the peerage, the prisoner may be try'd
 on their honour.

Coun. Your worship's distinction is just; knockings,
 scratches, &c. as asserted by Mr Serjeant.——

Serj. Asserted——Sir, do you doubt my instructions?

Coun. No interruptions, if you please, Mr Serjeant;
 I say as asserted, but can assertions be admitted as proofs?
 certainly no——

Serj. Our evidence is ready——

Coun. To that we object, to that we object, as it will
 anticipate the merits——your worship——

Serj. Your worship——

Just. Why, as you impeach the ghost's privilege, you
 must produce proofs of her scratches.

Serj. Call Shadrach Bodkin.

Clerk. Shadrach Bodkin, come into court.

Enter Bodkin.

Serj. Pray, Mr Bodkin, where do you live?

Bod. I sojourn in Lukener's-lane.

Serj. What is your profession?

Bod. I am a teacher of the word, and a taylor.

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X

Scam

Scam. Zounds, Will, it is a Methodist.

Tire. No, sure!

Scam. By the lord Harry, it is.

Clerk. Silence.

Serj. Do you know any thing of Fanny the Phantom?

Bod. Yea—I do.

Serj. Can you give any account of her thumpings, scratchings, and flutterings?

Bod. Yea—manifold have been the scratchings and knockings that I have heard.

Serj. Name the times.

Bod. I have attended the spirit Fanny from the first day of her flutterings, even to the last scratch that she gave.

Serj. How long may that be!

Bod. Five weeks did she flutter, and fix weeks did she scratch.

Scam. Six weeks—Damn it, I wonder she did not wear out her nails.

Clerk. Silence.

Serj. I hope the court is convinced.

Coun. Hold, Master Bodkin, you and I must have a little discourse. A taylor, you say. Do you work at your business?

Bod. No——

Coun. Look upon me, look upon the court——Then your present trade is your teaching?

Bod. It is no trade.

Coun. What is it then, a calling?

Bod. No, it is no calling—it is rather—as I may say—a forcing—a compelling——

Coun. By whom?

Bod. By the spirit that is within me——

Scam. It is an evil spirit, I believe; and needs must when the devil drives, you know, Will.

Tire. Right, Harry——

Coun. When did you first feel these spiritual motions?

Bod. In the town of Norwich, where I was born——One day as I was sitting cross-legged on my shop-board, new-seating a cloth pair of breeches of Mr Alderman Crape's—I felt the spirit within me, moving upwards
and

and downwards, and this way and that way, and tumbling and jumbling——At first I thought it was the solic——

Coun. And how are you certain it was not?

Bod. At last I heard a voice whispering within me, crying, Shadrach, Shadrach, Shadrach, cast away the things that belong to thee, thy thimble and sheers, and to the things that I bid thee.

Coun. And you did?

Bod. Yea, verily.

Coun. I think I have heard a little of you, Master Bodkin: and so you quitted your business, your wife, and your children?

Bod. I did.

Coun. You did——But then you commun'd with other mens wives?

Bod. Yea, and with widows and with maidens.

Coun. How came that about, Shadrach?

Bod. I was moved thereunto by the spirit.

Coun. I should rather think by the flesh——I have been told, friend Bodkin, that twelve became pregnant——

Bod. Thou art deceived——they were barely but nine.

Coun. Why, this was an active spirit.

Serj. But to the point, Mr Prosequi.

Coun. Well, then——you say you have heard those scratchings and knockings?

Bod. Yea——

Coun. But why did you think they came from a spirit?——

Bod. Because the very same thumps, scratches, and knocks, I have felt on my breast-bone from the spirit within me——

Coun. And these noises you are sure you heard on the first day of January?

Bod. Certain——

Serj. But to what do all those interrogatories tend?

Coun. To a most material purpose. Your worship observes, that Bodkin is positive as to the noises made on the first day of January by Fanny the Phantom: now if we can prove an Alibi, that is, that, on that very day, at that very time, the said Fanny was scratching and uttering any where else, we apprehend that we destroy

the credit of this witness.—Call Peter Paragraph.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Coun. This gentleman is an eminent printer, and has collected, for the public information, every particular relative to this remarkable story; but as he has the misfortune to have but one leg, your worship will indulge him in the use of a chair.

Clerk. Peter Paragraph, come into court.

Enter Paragraph.

Coun. Pray, Mr Paragraph, where was you born?

Par. Sir, I am a native of Ireland, and born and bred in the city of Dublin.

Coun. When did you arrive in the city of London!

Par. About the last autumnal equinox; and now I recollect, my journal makes mention of my departure for England, in the Belsborough packet, Friday, October the tenth, N. S. or new style.

Coun. Oh, then the journal is yours?

Par. Please your worship, it is; and relating thereto I believe I can give you a pleasant conceit.—Last week I went to visit a *peer*, for I know *peers*, and *peers* know me. Quoth his Lordship to me, Mr Paragraph, with respect to your journal, I would wish that your paper was whiter, or your ink blacker. Quoth I to the peer, by way of *reply*, I hope you will own there is enough for the money; his lordship was pleased to laugh. It was such a pretty repartee, he, he, he, he——

Just. Pray, Mr Paragraph, what might be your business in England?

Par. Hem—a little love-affair, please your worship.

Coun. A wife, I suppose—

Par. Something tending that way; even so long ago as January 1739-40, there past some amorous glances between us: she is the daughter of old Vamp of the Turnstile; but at that time I stifled my passion, Mrs Paragraph being then in the land of the living.

Coun. She is now dead?

Par. Three years and three quarters, please your worship: we were exceeding happy together; she was, indeed, a little apt to be jealous.

Coun. No wonder—

Par. Yes: they can't help it, poor souls; but not-with-

standing, at her death, I gave her a prodigious good-ster in my journal.

us. And how proceeds the present affair?

r. Just now, we are quite at a stand—

uz. How so?

r. The old scoundrel her father has play'd me a ry trick.

un. Indeed!

r. As he could give no money in hand, I agreed e her *fortune in copies*. I was to have *The Wits Vade m* entire; four hundred of News from the Invisible d, in sheets; all that remained of Glanvil upon es; Hill's Bees, Bardana, Brewing, and Balsam oney; and three-eighths of Robinson Crusoe.

un. A pretty fortune!

r. Yes; they are things that stir in the trade; but ust know that we agreed to go halves in Fanny hantom. But whilst I and two authors, whom I ir'd to ask questions, at nine shillings a-night, were g notes of the knockings at the house of Mr Par- imself, that old rascal Vamp had privately printed housand eighteen-penny scratchings, purchased of ethodist preachers, at the public house over the

in. Now we come to the point—look upon this ice; was he present at Mr Parson's knockings?

r. Never; this is one of the rascally Methodists— ee, fellow, how could you be such a scoundrel to r genuine your counterfeit scratchings to Vamp?

l. My scratchings were the true scratchings—

r. Why, you lying son of a whore, did not I buy r materials from the girl's father himself?

l. What the spirit commanded, that did I.

r. What spirit?

l. The spirit within me—

r. If I could but get at you, I would soon try sort of a spirit it is—stop, you villain.

[Exit Bodkin.

ogue has made his escape—but I will dog him to ut his haunts, and then return for a warrant—His ings! a scoundrel; I will have justice, or I'll us tabernacle into a pigstye. [Exit Paragraph.

Coun. I hope, please your worship, we have sufficiently established our *alibi*.

Just. You are unquestionably entitled to a jury of ghosts.

Coun. Mr Serjeant, you will provide us a list!

Serj. Let us see—you have no objection to Sir George Villars; the evil genius of Brutus; the ghost of Banquo; Mrs Veal.

Coun. We object to a woman—your worship—

Just. Why, it is not the practice; this, it must be own'd, is an extraordinary case. But however, if, on conviction, the Phantom should plead pregnancy, Mrs Veal will be admitted on the jury of matrons.

Serj. I thank your worship: then the court is adjourned.

[Terence and Dermot in an upper box.

Ter. By my shoul, but I will spake.

Der. Arrah, be quiet, Terence.

Ter. Dibble burn me, but I will: hut, hut, not spake! what should ail me? Harkee you, Mr Justice—

Scam. Hollo, what's the matter now, Will?

Der. Leave off, honey Terence, now you are well—

Ter. Dermot, be easy——

Scam. Hear him——

Tire. Hear him——

Ter. Ay, hear him, hear him; why the matter is this, Mr Justice, that little hopping fellow there, that Dublin-journal man is as great a liar as ever was born——

Tire. How so?

Ter. Ay, prithee don't bodder me; what, d'ye learn no more manners at Oxford college, than to stop a gentleman in the midst of his speech before he begins? oh; for shame of yourself—Why, the matter is this, Mr Justice: That there, what the debble d'ye ye call him, Pra-Praragraf; but, by my shoul, that is none of his name neither, I know the little bastard as well as myself; as to Fanny the Phantom, long life to the poor jontle woman, he knows no more of her than the mother who bore her——

Suds. Indeed! good Lord, you surprise me?

Ter. Arrah, now, honey Suds, spake when you are spoke

to; you ar'n't upon the jury, my jewel, now; by
oul, you are a little too fat for a ghost.

c. Prithee, friend Ephraim, let him go on: let's
little what he would be at—

c. I say, he knows nothing about the case that is
ed here, d'ye see, at all, at all; because why, I
ha been from Dublin above four weeks or a
1, and I saw him in his shop every day; so that
ould he be here and there too? unless, indeed, he
o fly backwards and forwards, and that, you see, is
ible, because why he has got a wooden leg.

m. What the devil is the fellow about?

c. I smoke him—Harkee, Terence, who do you
hat lame man to be?

c. Oh, my jewel, I know him well enough sure
s parson, for all he thought to conceal himself
anging his name—

m. Why, it is Foote, you fool.

c. Arrah, who?

c. Foote.

c. Fot, what the lecture-man, Pa—

c. Yes.

c. Arrah, be easy, honey—

m. Nay, inquire of Suds.

c. Truly I am minded 'twas he.

c. Your humble servant yourself, Mr Suds; by my
I'll wager you three thirteens to a rap, that it is
h matter at all, at all.

m. Done—and be judg'd by the company.

c. Done—I'll ask the orator himself—here he
[Enter Foote.] Harkee, honey Fot, was it
lf that was happing about here but now?

c. I have heard your debate, and must give judg-
gainst you—

c. What, yourself, yourself!

c. It was—

c. Then, faith, I have lost my thirteens—Arrah,
ot, my jewel, why are you after playing such
to bring an honest jontleman into company
he is nat—But what, is this selling of lectures
ing profession?

Foote.

Foot. I can't determine as yet; the public have been very indulgent; I have not long open'd.

Ter. By my shoul if it answers, will you be my pil, and learn me the trade?

Foot. Willingly——

Ter. That's an honest fellow, long life to you, li
[Sits do

Foot. Having thus completed our lecture on the quence peculiar to the bar, we shall produce one group of orators, in which will be exhibited specimen of every branch of the art. You will have at once the choleric, the placid, the voluble, the frigid, the thy, the turgid, the calm, and the clamorous; and as a proof of our exquisite skill, our subjects are not as a regular education has prepared for the reception of this sublime science, but a set of illiterate mechanics whom you are to suppose assembled at the Robin-hoc the Butcher-row, in order to discuss and adjust the various systems of Europe, but particularly to determine the separate interest of their own mother-country.

A C T III.

SCENE, *The Robin-Hood.*

THE PRESIDENT.

Dermot O'Droheda, *a Chairman*; Tom Twist, *a*
lor; Strap, *a Shoemaker*; Anvil, *a Smith*;
Slaughter, *a Butcher*; Catchpole, *a Bailiff*.
with pewter pots before them.

PRESIDENT.

SILENCE, gentlemen; are your pots replenished
porter?

All. Full, Mr President.

Pres. We will then proceed to the business of the
and let me beg, gentlemen, that you will, in your
bates, preserve that decency and decorum that is due
the importance of your deliberations, and the dignity
this illustrious assembly——

[*Gets up, pulls off his hat, and reads the mo*
Motion made last Monday to be debated to-day, "T
" for the future, instead of that vulgar potation
" per

"porter, the honourable members may be supplied with
"a proper quantity of Irish usquebaugh.

"Dermot O'Drogheda † his mark."

O' Dro. [*gets up.*] That's I myself.

Pref. Mr O'Drogheda.

O' Dro. Mr President, the case is this. It is not because I am any grate lover of that same usquebaugh that I have set my mark to the motion; but because I did not think it was decent for a number of jontlemen that were, d'ye see, met to settle the affairs of the nation, to be guzzling a pot of porter. To be sure, the liquor, is a pretty sort of a liquor enough when a man is hot with trotting between a couple of poles; but this is another-guess matter, because why, the head is concerned; and if it was not for the malt and the haps, dibble burn me but I would as soon take a drink from the Thames as your porter. But as to usquebaugh; ah long life to the liquor—it is an exhilarator of the bowels, and a stomatic to the head; I say, Mr President, it invigorates, it stimulates, it—in short, it is the onliest liquor of life, and no man alive will die whilst he drinks it.

[*Sits down. Twist gets up, having a piece of paper, containing the heads of what he says, in his hat.*]

Pref. Mr Timothy Twist.

T. Twist. Mr President, I second Mr O'Drogheda's motion; and, Sir, give me leave—I say, Mr president [*looks in his hat*] give me leave to observe, that, Sir, tho' it is impossible to add any force to what has been advanced by my honourable friend in the straps; yet, Sir, [*looks into his hat again,*] it may, Sir, I say, be necessary to obviate some objections that may be made to the motion. And first, it may be thought—I say, Sir, some gentlemen may think, that this may prove pernicious to our manufacture—[*looks in his hat;*] and the duty, doubtless, it is of every member of this illustrious assembly to have a particular eye unto that; but Mr President—Sir—[*looks in his hat, is confused, and sits down.*]

Pref. Mr Twist, O pray finish, Mr Twist.

Twist. [*gets up.*] I say, Mr President, that, Sir, if Sir, it be considered that—as—I say—[*looks in his hat,*] I have nothing farther to say. [*Sits down, and Strap gets up.*]

Pref.

Pref. Mr Strap.

Strap. Mr President, it was not my intention to trouble the assembly upon this occasion; but when I hear insinuations thrown out by gentlemen, where the interest of this country is so deeply concerned, I own I cannot sit silent; and give me leave to say, Sir, there never came before this assembly a point of more importance than this; it strikes, Sir, at the very root, Sir, of your constitution: for, Sir, what does this motion imply? it implies that porter, a wholesome, domestic manufacture, is to be prohibited at once. And for what, Sir? for a foreign pernicious commodity. I had, Sir, formerly the honour, in conjunction with my learned friend in the leather apron, to expel sherbet from amongst us, as I looked upon lemons as a fatal and foreign fruit; and can it be thought, Sir, that I will sit silent to this? No, Sir, I will put my shoulders strongly against it; I will oppose it *manibus totibus*. For should this proposal prevail, it will not end here: fatal, give me leave to say, will, I foresee, be the issue; and I shan't be surprised, in a few days, to hear from the same quarter, a motion for the expulsion of gin, and a premium for the importation of whisky.

[A hum of approbation, with significant nods and winks from the other members. He sits down, and Anvil and another member get up together; some cry Anvil, others Jacob.]

Pref. Mr Anvil.

Anvil. Mr President, Sir—

[The members all blow their noses, and cough; Anvil talks all the while, but is not heard.]

Pref. Silence, gentlemen; pray, gentlemen. A worthy member is up.

Anvil. I say, Mr President, that if we consider this case in its utmost extent—*[all the members cough, and blow their noses again,]* I say, Sir, I will. Nay, I insist on being heard. If any gentleman has any thing to say any where else, I'll hear him.

[Members all laugh: Anvil sits down in a passion, and Slaughter gets up.]

Pref. Mr Samuel Slaughter.

Sla. Sir, I declare it, at the bare hearing of this here
mo-

motion, I am all over in a sweat. For my part, I can't think what gentlemen mean by talking in that there manner; not but I likes that every man should deliver his mind; I does mine; it has been ever my way; and when a member opposes me, I like him the better for it; its right; I am pleas'd; he can't please me more; it is as it should be; and tho' I differ from the honourable gentleman in the flannel night-cap over the way, yet I am pleased to hear him say what he thinks; for, Sir, as I said, it is always my rule to say what I think, right or wrong—[*a loud laugh.*] Ay, ay, gentlemen may laugh; with all my heart, I am used to it, I don't mind t a farthing: but, Sir, with regard to that there motion, I entirely agree with my worthy friend with the pewter pot at his mouth. Now, Sir, I would fain ask any gentleman this here question: Can any thing in nature be more natural for an Englishman than porter? I declare, Mr President, I think it the most wholesome liquor in the world. But if it must be a change, let us change it for rum, a wholesome palatable liquor, a liquor that—in short, Mr President, I don't know such a liquor. Ay, gentlemen may stare; I say, and I say it upon my conscience, I don't know such a liquor. Besides, I think there is in this here affair a point of law, which I shall leave to the consideration of the learned; and for that there reason, I shall take up no more of your time. [*He sits down, Catchpole gets up.*]

Pref. Mr Catchpole.

Catch. I get up to the point of law. And though, Sir, I am bred to the business, I can't say I am prepared for this question. But though this usquebaugh, as a dram, may not (by name) be subject to a duty, yet it is my opinion, or rather belief, it will be consider'd, as in the case of horses, to come under the article of dry'd goods—But I move that another day this point be debated.

Sec. I second the motion.

[*Catchpole gives a paper to the President, who reads it.*]

Pref. Hear your motion.

“ That it be debated next Thursday, Whether the
“ dram usquebaugh is subject to a particular duty; or, as
“ the

“ the case of horses, to be considered under the a
“ of dry’d goods.”

All. Agreed, agreed.

Foot. And now, ladies and gentlemen, having
duced to you glaring proofs of our great ability in e
species of oratory; having manifested, in the perfor
our pupils, our infinite address in conveying our k
ledge to others, we shall close our morning’s lecture
stituted for the public good, with a proposal for the
ticular improvement of individuals. We are read
give private instructions to any reverend gentleman i
probationary sermon for a lectureship; to young b
sters who have causes to open, or motions to make
all candidates for the sock or buskin; or to the new m
bers of any of those oratorical societies with which
metropolis is at present so plentifully stock’d.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE.

IN TWO ACTS.

By MR JACKMAN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Sir Gilbert Pumpkin,</i>	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Edinburgh, 1782.</i>
<i>Mr. Stanley,</i> { Officers in }	Mr Baddeley.	Mr Charteris.
<i>Mr. Stukely,</i> { the army, }	Mr Farren.	Mr Sutherland.
<i>William,</i> servant to Charles,	Mr Palmer.	Mr Hallion.
<i>Waiter,</i>	Mr Everard.	Mr Bland, junior.
<i>Digger,</i> { Servants to }	Mr La-Mash.	Mr Simpson.
<i>Symon,</i> { Sir Gilbert, }	Mr Parsons.	Mr Johnson.
<i>Pat,</i>	Mr Burton.	Mr Banks.
<i>Loftler,</i>	Mr Griffith.	Mr Sparks.
	Mr Carpenter.	Mr Hamilton.

W O M E N.

<i>Miss Bridget Pumpkin,</i>	Mrs Hopkins.	Mrs Charteris.
<i>Miss Kitty Sprightly.</i>	Miss P. Hopkins.	Mrs Sparks.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr KING.

PRAY, let me see if what France says be true,
 That smiling faces in this land are few.
 I'll tell you how they mark you to a tittle:
 They say, you think too much, and talk too little;
 While you with scorn, cry out against their prate,
 And swear, with heels so light, their heads want weight.
 Be but some clouds of politics blown o'er,
 England would show its laughing face once more.
 For this good end our bard throws in his mite,
 And hopes to steal you from your cares to-night.
 Now for our title—*All the World's a Stage.*
 The lively French, of every rank and age,

P R O L O G U E.

In acting scenes employ their laughing hours,
 And life's rough path make gay by strewing flowers.
 Let but the fashion spread throughout our isle,
 And what makes Frenchmen grin, will make you smile.
 The drama would, like alkalis, protect you
 From those four humours which so much affect you;
 Sweeten your blood, with its swift current mix,
 And cure the crudities of politics.
 Our farce exhibits such a scene as this—
 And low are our *persona dramatis*.
 The various servants at a country-seat,
 As actors, furnish out the curious treat.
 In Alexander will the Butler rave,
 And nought can Clytus, the fat Coachman, save
 From Philip's son—You'll see the hero soon,
 Death dealing round him with a silver spoon.
 The Cook, Roxana, glowing with desire,
 Burns as she bastes—her bosom all on fire!
 The Groom and Footmen act their parts so well,
 No longer Tom and Dick, they hear no bell!
 The Butler mad—all's in confusion hurl'd,
 He can't obey, for he commands the world!
 His victories alone possess his brain—
 So master bawls, and mistress scolds in vain.
 Critic—indulge these heroes in their fancies—
 Nor, by your frowns, restore them to their senses.

A C T I.

SCENE, *An Inn at Shrewsbury.*

Charles Stanley and Harry Stukely at Breakfast.

HARRY.

F A I T H, Charles, I cannot think as you do on this subject.

Cha. I am sorry for it; but when you have served two or three campaigns more, take my word for it, Harry, you will have the same opinion of the army that I entertain at this moment.

Har. 'Tis impossible; the army is the only profession where a great soul can be completely gratified: after a glorious and well-fought field, the approbation of my sovereign, with the acclamations of my brave countrymen, are rewards, amply repaying whole years of service.

Cha.

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ba. True : but the honours we gather very often in the head of a commander who has been only an witness to this "well-fought field."

ar. Ah, but every individual has his share—

ba. Of the danger, I grant you ; and when a re- is made of the killed, wounded, &c. you see in every paper a list of them in the following order : three ains, seven lieutenants, twelve ensigns, killed ; so y wounded : then comes in order, the serjeants, ser- majors, drummers, &c. &c. &c. and as to the rank file, they are given to you in the lump ; one hun- , or one thousand, just as it happens.

ar. But their memories live for ever in the hearts their countrymen.

ba. Yes, while the windows are in a blaze on the of a victory, or while a city-politician drinks his of coffee and reads the story : after that moment, memories and their bodies decay together. Well, me a good wife, ease, and a moderate compe-

ar. How comes it, Charles, that with these senti- s you ever wore a cockade ? and, what is more un- table, signalized yourself in so extraordinary a man- luring the late war ?

ba. I'll tell you :—Whenever I receive the pay of over-ign, and am honoured with the character of rusty and well-beloved, I will faithfully, and I hope ly, discharge the confidence he reposes in me.—

Harry, you have no serious objection to matrimo- if you have, we had better proceed no further ; our t has a period.

ar. Not in the least, I assure you : I think myself ble of engaging in both the fields of love and war. I marry because it has its conveniencies.

“—But when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid foil with wanton dulness
My speculative and offic'd instruments,
Let all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation.”

re's a touch of Othello for you, and, I think, &-
s.

Cha. 'Egad, Harry, that speech puts me in mind of a letter which I receiv'd from Miss Kitty Sprightly, the fair ward of my uncle Sir Gilbert Pumpkin—You must know, we are to have a play acted at the old family-mansion for our entertainment, or rather for the entertainment of Miss Kitty; who is so mad after every thing that has the appearance of a theatre, that I should not be surpris'd if she eloped with the first strolling company that visited this part of the country.

Har. Let us have the letter by all means.

Cha. [*reads.*] "Miss Kitty Sprightly sends her compliments to Captain Charles; and as she is informed Sir Gilbert has invited him to Strawberry-Hall, she thinks it necessary to acquaint Captain Charles, that he must shortly perfect himself in the character of Captain Macheath, as the ladies expect him to perform that character at the mansion-house. If he has a good Filch in the circle of his acquaintance, she desires the Captain will not fail to bring him down."

Har. Why, what the devil! I'll lay my life you have brought me down to play this curious character in this very curious family.

Cha. You are right, Harry; and if you can slice away the old sister, you will play the part to some advantage—you will have fifty-thousand pounds to your benefit, my boy.

Har. You mean this as an introduction to the family—Oh, then have at you—But damn it, I can't sing; I can act tolerably.

Cha. I'll warrant you. But come, now we have cleaned ourselves, we will repair to the mansion; we are only two miles from it; they expect us to dinner. William, desire the hostler to put the horses to. Waiter, a bill.

Enter William.

Wil. The chaise, Sir, has been in waiting this half hour.

Cha. Come then; I'll tell you more of my project as we proceed.

Enter Waiter.

Upon my word, waiter, your charges are intolerable—What, five shillings for a boiled fowl?

Wait.

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Wait. We know your honour isn't on half-pay: we always charge to the pocket of our customers, your honour.

Har. Well, but good Mr Waiter, take back your bill, and in your charge consider us on half-pay.

Wait. Lord bless your honour! you are in too good flesh for that: why, your honour looks as fat and as well as myself.

Cha. Ha, ha, ha! [*Both laugh.*] There is half-a-crown above your bill; which you may dispose of as you please. Get you gone!

Wait. Your honours, I hope, will remember honest Will Snap, at the Antelope, when you come next to Shrewsbury. [*Exit.*]

Cha. Mr Honesty, your servant. Travelling, Charles, now become so chargeable, that few gentlemen of our cloth can afford to breathe the fresh air for a day—

Enter Hostler.

but what's your business?

-Host. The hostler, your honour. There isn't such a air of bays, your honour, in the country; they'll take you to Sir Gilbert's in ten minutes without turning a hair.—I hope I shall drink your honours health.

Cha. Another fee, Harry—we must comply with the custom of travelling.

Har. Get out of my sight this moment, ye set of roundrels, or I will knock you down with this chair. [*Takes up one.*] Landlord, hollo! why the devil don't you send in all the poor of the parish? This is highway robbery, without the credit of being robbed. Let us get away, Charles, while we have money to pay the turnpikes.

Cha. Alons!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *A Hall at the Mansion-house.*

Enter Diggery, with a play-book in his hand; Wat, Cymon, and several Clowns, servants to the family, making a noise.

Dig. Hold your damn'd tongues! How is it possible can tell you how to act, when you all open like a kennel of hounds? Listen, but don't say a word. I am to be Alexander; and, Wat, you are to be my friend Clintus; and—

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Wat. Ah, Muster Diggery! you shall see what I'll say.

Dig. Damme, hold your tongue, I say once more—You'll say!—what can you say?—Say only what is in the book, and don't be cramming in your own nonsense. But listen all of you, and mind—You must know, the man who wrote this play was mad—

Wat. Lord, I should like to play mad.

Dig. Will nobody stop this fellow's mouth? Why, you blockhead, you have not sense enough to be mad; you'd play the fool well enough, but how can you extort that damn'd pudding-face of your's to madness? Why, Wat, your features are as fix'd as the man in the moon's.

All. Go on, Master Diggery, go on.

Dig. Well, let me see—[*Turns over the leaves of the play.*] You, Wat, I say, is to be Clintus; and I am to say before you all, that great Almon gave me birth; then Wat, you are to say, You lie!

Wat. Ah, but then you'll stick me.

Dig. Never mind that; button your waistcoat over one of our trenchers.—Lord, I forgot to begin right; I am first to come out of a Tim-whiskey, which you are to draw; and when I am come down, you are all to fall upon your marrow-bones. And as to you, Wat, if you even look at me, I'll come up, and give you such a douse of the chops as you never had in your life.

Wat. Let us try; now you shall see, Muster Diggery.—

Dig. Then do as I bid you; down every mother's skin of you. [*They all kneel down; Diggery draws back.*] Don't stir none, if Miss Bridget was ringing every bell in the house. When I say "Rise all, my friends," then do you all get up.

Wat. Is that right, Muster Diggery?

Dig. Very well. Now [*A bell rings.*]—Zounds, here's Miss Bridget!

Enter Miss Bridget.

Miss Brid. Where, in the name of mischief, have you been, rascal? Your master has been looking for you this hour, and no tidings, high nor low.

Dig. I'm going. [*Exit, leaving the rest kneeling.*]
Miss.

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Miss Brid. Mercy upon us! what's all this? Cymon!
! are you all mad? Why don't you answer?

ym. Hush, hush! Diggery is to play mad; I must
sitir.

Miss Brid. Mercy upon me! these fellows may be
k mad for ought I know. I'll raise the house—
ther, brother! Kitty Sprightly! Where are you

Enter Sir Gilbert.

ir Gil. What the devil's the matter?

Miss Brid. Look at those fellows, brother; they are
out of their senses; they are all mad.

ir Gil. Mad, are they!—why then, run and bring
the short blunderbuss that's hanging in the hall, and
take a pop at the whole covey.

Enter Diggery.

gery, what's the matter with those fellows?

Dig. Nothing, Sir.

ir Gil. Nothing! Why, what the devil keeps them in
t posture then?

Dig. Lord, Sir, I'll soon make them get upon their

ir Gil. Do then, I desire you; and send them all to
mad-house.

Dig. [*goes up to them all.*] “ Rise all, my friends.”
by all rise.] Lord, Sir, we were only acting a
y.

ir Gil. You son of a whore! get out of my sight this
ment. [*They all run away.*] Was ever man so plagued
h such a set of scoundrels? Morning, noon, and night,
his fellow Diggery taking these wretches from their
our, and making Cæsars, Alexanders, and blackamoors
them.

Miss Brid. Brother, brother, if you had routed that
t of vagabonds who were mumming in our barn about
months ago, none of this would have happened.

Sir Gil. True, true, sister Bridget. It was but a few
s ago I went to take a walk about my fields; when
ame back, the first thing I saw was a large sheet of
er pasted on the street-door, and on it were wrote in
ge characters;

“ This

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"This evening will be presented here,
"The GREAT ALEXANDER.

"Alexander by Mr DIGGERY DUCKLIN,

"Roxana by Miss TIPPET BUSKY,

"And the part of Statira by a YOUNG LADY,

"(Being her first appearance on any stage.)"

Damme, if I know my own house.

Miss Brid. That's not all, brother; Diggery had nearly smother'd that silly huffy, Tippet, in the oven a few days ago.

Sir Gil. The oven! What the devil brought her there?

Miss Brid. Why, Diggery prevailed upon her to go in; and he said he would break open the door of it with the kitchen poker, and that would be playing Romo.

Sir Gil. Romo! Romeo, you mean; why, sister Bridget, you can't speak English—Surely some dæmon has bewitch'd our family! [*Aside.*] But, pray, what became of Juliet in the oven?

Miss Brid. Hearing a noise, I went down stairs; and the moment he saw me he dropt the poker, and ran away; but I had no sooner opened the door of the oven, than I saw her gasping for breath; and it was as much as I could do to drag her out, and save her from being suffocated.

Sir Gil. Why the devil did you not leave her there? she would have been a good example to the whole family. As to that fellow Diggery, he will be hanged for the murder of some of these creatures, as sure as I am alive. I overheard him the other day desiring Cymon to fall on the carving-knife, and he would then die like Cato.

Miss Brid. If they continue these pranks, we shall never be able to receive captain Charles and his friend; they will certainly imagine we are all run mad in good earnest.

Sir Gil. How can it be otherwise? Miss Kitty Sprightly, forsooth, extorted a promise from me the other day, that when Charles and his friend came down, I would permit the Beggar's Opera to be got up (as she phrased it), in order to entertain them.

Miss Brid. Brother, that girl is worse than the whole gang of them.

Sir

Sir Gil. Leave me to manage her : I will endeavour to release myself from the promise I made her ; and instead of this play, a ball may answer the purpose. I hope, after, you have prepared a good dinner for my nephew and his friend. He informs me in his letter, that the gentleman he brings down with him is a man of family, and a soldier that does honour to his profession.

Miss Brid. I must desire, brother, you will mind your ward, and leave the house to me ; let him be related to the first duchess in the land, he shall say, after he leaves Strawberry-Hall, he never feasted until he came there.

Enter Diggery.

Dig. Lord, Sir, Captain Macheath is just arrived!

Sir Gil. Captain Macheath! my nephew, rascal ; desire him to walk up immediately.

Dig. Yes, Sir—Oh, Sir, here he is.

Enter Charles and Harry.

Sir Gil. Ah, nephew, I am glad to see you! How have you been these two years? I have not seen you since our last campaign.

Cha. In very good health, Sir; and am sincerely happy to see you so. Permit me, Sir, to introduce to your acquaintance the companion of my dangers and my friendship.

Sir Gil. Sir, you are welcome to Strawberry-Hall. I love a soldier; and I am informed you support the character in all its relations.

Har. You do me great honour, Sir Gilbert; I shall endeavour to deserve your good opinion.

Dig. He's a better figure than me, and better action
10. [Imitates him.]

Cha. I was in great hopes, my dear aunt, that when next I visited Strawberry-Hall, I should have found you happy in the possession of your old lover, parson Dosey. I hope you have not banish'd him.

Miss Brid. Don't talk of the wretch; you know he is as always my aversion.

[Diggery, at the side, is stabbing himself with a large key.]

Sir Gil. What are you about, Diggery?

Dig. Sir! [Puts the key into his pocket.]

Sir Gil. Come, come, I'll tell you the fact, and spare her

her blushes. Parson Dosey, you must know, some time ago, was playing a pool of quadrille with my sister and three of her elderly maiden-acquaintances who live in the neighbourhood, when, behold ye, to the astonishment of all the ladies, the parson's right eye dropt into the fist-tray! Egad, I was as much astonish'd as the rest; for none of us had ever discovered the defect, altho' he has been in the parish for so many years: but in a twinkling he whipt it into the socket; and when I looked him in the face, damme if I did not think there was as much meaning in it as in any eye about the table.

Dig. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

[*Sir Gil. interrupts him in the middle of his laugh.*

Sir Gil. For shame, Diggery!—[*Drives him off.*]—Bless me, I forgot!—Give me leave, Sir, to introduce you to my sister.

Har. [*Kisses her, and bows very politely.*] Upon my word, Madam, such an imposition deserved a very severe chastisement. I hope, Madam, you never permitted this made-up gentleman to indulge the eye he had left with another view of your fair self?

Miss Brid. Dear Sir, I hope you don't mind my brother; he is always upon his sagaries; he puts me to the blush a hundred times a-day—Faith, a very pretty young fellow! I'll take a more particular view of him presently.

[*Aside.*

Sir Gil. No, no; my sister's observation was a just one; "That when a woman marries, she ought to have a man naturally complete."

Miss Brid. So, brother, you will go on with your vile conceptions.

Sir Gil. I have no vile conceptions. Why do you suppose them vile, sister Bridget?

Miss Brid. Gentlemen, I cannot stay in the room.

Har. Dear Madam, I beg—pray, Madam—

[*Takes her by the hand.*

Miss Brid. I must go, Sir, I am in such a tremble; I shall certainly drop with confusion, if I stay any longer.

[*Exit Miss Brid.*

Har. Indeed, Sir Gilbert, this canonical gentleman, presuming to address a lady of Miss Pumpkin's qualifications,

without at least discovering the imperfection, was not to be forgiven.

Gil. Ha, ha, ha! Miss Pumpkin's qualifications! to that, Captain, and you will soon have a regi-

I find the soldier has not spoiled the courtier.

r. I really think what I say, Sir;—the deception pardonable.

Gil. Not at all: the parson was very poor, and he she was very rich; and if the fellow was blind with ye, and squinted with the other, I could not blame o marry her, if she was fool enough to consent to nion: indeed it was my business to prevent it; but ifcovery of the glass eye did the business more ually than I could do, had I the eloquence of a Ci-

a. But pray, uncle, where is your fair charge, Miss Sprightly? She's grown, I suppose, a fine girl by ime.

Gil. A fine girl, quotha!—I do not like that warm ry; a red coat may spoil my project of marrying myself. [*Considers.*] I have it! I'll tell him she's a crack-brain'd. [*Aside.*]—Nephew, a word in your the poor girl has got a touch.

a. A touch! you don't say so?

Gil. As sure as you are in your senses; she's al- imagining herself to be either Helen, Cleopatra, Peachum, or some other female of antiquity, that a noise in the world.

a. Oh, ho! I smell a rat here; but I'll humour it. *le.*]—'Tis a strange species of madness, uncle; she's ibly play-mad.

r. Gil. You have it; and the contagion has run thro' ouse—there's Diggery, Wat, Cymon, Tippet, and whole family, except my sister, have got the bite. ; sometimes you wou'd imagine, from the wooden res, straw crowns, and such like trumpery, that bed- was transported from Moorfields to the spot you now, upon. I give you this hint, that your friend may e surpris'd; you will explain the unhappy situation e poor girl to him.—An excellent thought! it will her at a distance from him. [*Aside.*]

a. Harry, my uncle informs me, [*winking at him,*] that

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that his fair ward, the young lady I mentioned to you, has lately had a touch.

Har. A touch! I am heartily sorry for it; how came the unlucky accident? I hope no faithless one-eyed lover in the case.

Sir Gil. Zounds! no, no, no! Why, nephew, you described the girl's disorder abominably—she lately had a touch here, here, Sir. [*Points to his forehead.*]

Har. Oh, is that all? I hope, Sir, with a little attention she will be soon restored.

Cha. I am very sorry to hear this account of my dear little Kitty; let us visit her: where is she, uncle?

Sir Gil. Dear little Kitty! Oh, ho! But I'll have all my senses about me.—[*Aside.*] In her own chamber, I suppose: but follow me, and you shall see her; she's quite another thing to what she was two years ago, when you saw her—But come, gentlemen, dinner will be shortly at the table, and I long to have a bumper with you.

[*Exit.*]

Har. So, Charles! this is the fair lady you brought me down to run away with.

Cha. Even so.

Har. Why, what the devil would the world say of me for being such a scoundrel?

Cha. Marry the lady, Harry; and when you have fifty thousand pounds in your pocket, the world will be very glad to shake hands and be friends with you.

Har. I would as soon marry Hecate—

Cha. As my aunt? Very polite truly! But keep her out of my way, and you may do with her as you please. This girl, who my uncle says is mad, I believe I shall be able to restore in a short time; and it will go hard with me, if you will assist me in the project, but I will put her into a post-chaise and set out for London this very night.

Har. Command me, dear Charles, in any thing that can be of service to you: but don't you think making the proposal so soon will be rather precipitate?

Cha. Not at all: we are to have the play, you know, at night, previous to which I must rehearse with her; she's romantic, and an elopement need only be mentioned to put it in execution; she has seen so many on the stage, that

that her head turns on nothing else; besides, my uncle must not have time to smell such a scheme, or he will soon put it out of my power to execute it.

Har. Success attend you, my dear boy. Have you instructed William? He's a trusty shrewd fellow.

Cha. He has got his lesson: he will soon get into Diggery's good graces, if he can only give him a speech out of a play; however, I hope William will be able to manage him—Oh, here is Diggery.

Enter Diggery, with a napkin in his hand.

Cha. Diggery, my honest fellow, I am glad to see you; why, you are grown out of knowledge: it is some years since I was first favoured with your acquaintance, Diggery.

Dig. So it is, your honour. Let me see, [*considers,*] you was first favour'd with my acquaintance, four years come next Lammas: but I knew nothing then; I was quite a thing, your honour.

Cha. You have improved, Diggery, since that time, I see, considerably.

Dig. How do you see that, your honour?

Cha. Why, your face shows it; there are the lines of good sense, wit, and humour, in every feature; not that insipid face you used to have, no more expression in it than a toasted muffin.

Dig. I got all, your honour, by learning to read; you'll see me, when I play, look in a way that will frighten the whole family—no muffin faces; all mispression, your honour.

[*Harry hums a tune out of the Beggar's Opera, and sits.*]

Dig. [*looks at him.*] Master Charles, who is that gentleman? He's acting, isn't he? Has he a muffin face?

Cha. No, no, Diggery, don't disturb him; he is one of the first actors of the age, and has a face that would frighten the devil when he pleases; he'll put us all to rights; I brought him down for the purpose.

Dig. Suppose your honour desires him to kill himself for a minute or two before dinner. I have tried a thousand times, and never could kill myself to my own satisfaction in all my life. I'll lend him my key. [*Bell rings,*] Coming—Oh, Master Charles, I was desired to bid you

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and the gentleman come to dinner, but I quite forgot it; the dinner sat down to the family before I came in—run as hard as you can.

Cha. Come, Harry, the family waits dinner.

Dig. "The family waits dinner." [*Exit.*
[*Imitates him.*] I can't do it like him—Lord! how he'll do Captain Mac-
heath in the play! I'm glad he's not to be hanged.
[*Sings.*] "Let us take the road"—Hark!

[*Without.*] Diggery!

Dig. Coming.

[*Exit.*

A C T II.

SCENE, *a Dining Parlour*: Sir Gilbert, Miss Bridget, Miss Kitty, Charles, and Harry, at dinner; Diggery attending at the side-board.

SIR GILBERT.

I HOPE, gentlemen, you like your dinner. As to my wine, there is not better in the country, I'll lay a hog'shead of claret.

Har. Your entertainment is so good, Sir Gilbert, that I shall beg leave to prolong my visit. What shall we do, Charles, when we reach London, that cursed seat of noise and bustle.

Cha. Endeavour to reconcile ourselves to it; a soldier must not always expect good quarters. Pray, Miss Kitty, how does your fair friend, Miss Sally Cockle?

Kit. Oh, she has been married a long time, and was lately brought to bed of two thumping boys.

Miss Brid. Child, you must not tell that.

Kit. What, mus'n't I tell the truth? Why then I do say, she was brought to bed of two boys not six months ago; but she will be at our play to-night.

Sir Gil. I told you how it was; but she's not mischievous.

Cha. She has not the appearance of it—I am sure her recollection is very good.

Sir Gil. Come, my young soldiers, let us have a bumper to his Majesty; what say you, my boys?

Har. A hundred, Sir Gilbert; and I say done first.

Sir

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Sir Gil. Why, that's rather too many; but while I can stand or sit, have at you. Come, Diggery, let us have three bumpers in a minute here. Diggery! What is that fellow about there?

[*Diggery is kneeling at the foot of the side-board, and as if lamenting the death of Statira: they all rise and look at him.*]

Sir Gil. I say, Diggery—

[*Diggery turns his head about, but continues kneeling.*]

Dig. Sir.

Sir Gil. What are you about? Acting again, I suppose.

Dig. Lord, Sir, I was only striving to cry over Statira.

[*Rises.*]

Sir Gil. To cry over Statira! And what have you to do with Statira? Let Statira go to the devil, and give us three bumpers to his Majesty; and then you may go follow Statira if you will.

Dig. Yes, Sir.

[*Brings the wine.*]

Sir Gil. Come, boys, here is his Majesty's health, and long, glorious, and happy reign to him.

Kit. Indeed, guardie, you frighten poor Diggery so, that he forgets his part almost as soon as he gets it.

Sir Gil. Kitty Sprightly, hold your tongue. I bid you have surely a right to correct my own servants: but I'm satisfied; for after this night, if ever I hear the name of that sheep-stealing scoundrel Willy, as you call him, will — There now, that fellow's at his devil's trade again. [*Diggery is fencing with a large knife.*] Call Cymon here, thou imp of the devil; we shall be able to do something with him—Oh Lord, oh Lord!

Dig. Cymon—Cymon—

[*The last very loud.*]

Enter Cymon.

Cym. Here.

Sir Gil. Cymon, do you attend table; that fellow is among the incurables.

Cha. After we have performed this play to-night, I say, Sir, the family will have quite enough of it.

Miss Brid. Then I wish it was over with all my heart.

Cha. Miss Kitty, will you drink a glass of wine with me? Shall I have the honour to touch your glass?

Kit. If you please, Sir.

Har. Suppose, Miss Pumpkin, we make it a quartetto.

Sir Gil. A quartetto! Why not a quintetto? Cymon, five glasses of wine; be quick—I suppose you are not engaged with Statira.

Cym. Yes—no, your honour.

[*Gives five glasses of wine.*]

Sir Gil. We could not get any fish for you, altho' we sent far and near for some.

Cha. Give me good roast beef, uncle, the properest diet for a Briton and a soldier.

[*Cymon fills a glass; Diggery takes it up, and gives it to him: he appears to instruct Cymon what to do with it; Cymon drinks it, throws the glass over his head, and sings.*]

Cym. “And my comrades shall see that I die.”

[*Diggery and Cymon run off. All rise.*]

Miss Brid. Mercy on me! Cymon's at work again.

Sir Gil. I wish, with all my heart, the devil had the whole pack.—Was ever man so plagu'd?

Har. Dear Sir Gilbert, do not be uneasy; they will be all tired of playing before to-morrow night, or I am very much mistaken.

Kit. Now, guardie, for my part, I think the best way will be to let them have their belly-full of playing.

Miss Brid. For shame, Kitty; you must not say belly-full before company, that's naughty.

Kit. Well, I do say, that if guardie would only let us play as much as we please, is is very probable we should as soon be tired of it as he is.

Har. 'Egad, Mrs Kitty, an excellent thought—The girl's out of her senses. [*Aside to Charles.*—Suppose, Sir Gilbert, we adopt it.

Cha. Do, uncle; my friend and I will engage in one week to play them so sick, that the sight of a theatre would be as bad as an emetic to them.

Sir Gil. Do you say so! if I thought that could be done—

Miss Brid. Indeed, indeed, brother, it will make them all as mad as March hares.

Har. Believe me, Madam, it will not; I knew a gentleman

tleman who every night in his life was at one or other of the play-houses, until he purchased a share in each of them; and afterwards he no more troubled himself about the theatre than you do about learning to ride in the great saddle.

Miss Brid. No!—Well, that's amazing.

Sir Gil. Well, well, I leave the management of this matter to you both; do with them as you please. If we can provide a remedy for this disorder, let us spare no pains to find it out. Sister, show your nephew and his friend the garden; and do you, Kitty, go too. You will find me in my study. Take care of that poor girl, Charles; she is very sensible at some moments. [Exit.

Gha. "Fear not my government."

Kit. That's what the black man says in the play. This is to my own taste exactly. [Aside.

Gha. "Oh, my Statira, thou relentless fair!

"Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them."

Kit. "Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,

"The fragrant violet, or opening rose,

"Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath.

"Then he will talk—good gods, how he will talk!"

[He leads her out, looking at each other languishingly.

SCENE, *The Garden.*

Enter Miss Bridget and Harry.

Har. These improvements, Madam, are the very extreme of elegance. I take for granted, they were laid out agreeable to your design.

Miss Brid. Partly, Sir. My brother wanted to have the garden crammed full of naked figures, in a most indecent way; but I said not; and if you observe, they are clothed from head to foot; you can't see the ankle of one of them.

Har. There, Madam, you blended decency with elegance, which is little attended to in these days. Besides, the artist has the same opportunity to shew his skill on the drapery of a lady's petticoat, as in finishing a Venus de Medicis.

Miss Brid. And so I told my brother. Says I, the Venus de Med-med—But wont you please to sit down, Sir?

You have walked a great deal; I am afraid you are fatigued—Sit down, Sir, and dispose yourself.

[*He brings two garden-chairs to the front of the stage; they look at each other languishingly.*]

And are you certain, Sir, that this kind of play business will not be attended with any bad consequences to the family?

Har. Indeed I think not, Madam. A play, certainly, is one of the most rational amusements we have. The Greek and Roman stages contributed very much to civilize those nations, and in a great measure rescued them from their original barbarity.

Miss Brid. So I told my brother—Says I, the Greeks, the Romans, the Irish, and a great number of other barbarous nations, had plays.

Har. True, Madam.

Miss Brid. But he said they were all Jacobites.

Har. The justice of that remark, I confess, strikes me—But, Madam, you, you, you—Damme me if I know what to say to this old fool—Where is Charles?

[*Aside.*]
Miss Brid. I have touch'd him with my observation—What a delicate insensibility he discovers! [*Aside.*—I find, Sir, from your conversation, you have read a monstrous deal. You have taken a degree, I suppose, Sir, at one principal adversity?

Har. There's no standing this. [*Aside.*—Oh, yes, Madam; and it cost me many an uneasy moment before I could obtain it: the only thing that made my time pass away, even tolerably, was, that during my probation I sometimes had the honour of a visit from the muses.

Miss Brid. Pray, Sir, is that the family which lives at Oxford?

Har. No faith, Madam, they very seldom even sojourn there; they are a very whimsical family; and, altho' of the highest extraction, very often condescend to visit a cottage instead of a palace.

Miss Brid. I shall be very glad to see them at Strawberry Hall, or any friend of your's, Sir.

Har. Dear, Madam, your goodness overwhelms me. I'll try this old Tabby with a love-scene; she grows amorous. [*Aside.*—I cannot but think, Madam, of the
un-

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unaccountable vanity of the parson, whom Sir Gilbert so humourously described to-day. From the enterprising genius of this spiritual gentleman, and from his wanting an eye, one may with great propriety, I think, give him the name of the canonical Hanibal.

Miss Brid. Ha, ha! a very good summily indeed, Sir; he was indeed quite a Canibal, and so I told my brother: but don't mention his name, Sir; it always gives me the spleen.

Har. His presumption, Madam, deserved death. Monstrous! to think of obtaining such a hand as this, [*kisses it,*] without the requisites even to gaze upon it.—Oh! 'tis intolerable.

[*She rises, and he kneels.*]

Miss Brid. Dear Sir! Lord, Sir! With what a warmth he kisses my hand. Oh! he's a dear deluder. [*Aside.*]—Sir, Captain, what do you call 'um, if we are seen, I am undone.

Har. Be under no apprehensions, my angel!

[*Kisses her hand again.*]

Miss Brid. My angel! there's a word for you—I shall certainly give way in a few moments. [*Aside.*]

Enter Diggery, peeping at the side-scene.

Dig. What are these two cajoling about? Acting, I suppose. I'll try if I can't act the same way.

Har. Ah, Miss Pumpkin, Miss Pumpkin!

[*Kneels; takes out his handkerchief, and weeps.*]

Dig. Ah, Miss Pumpkin, Miss Pumpkin?

[*Kneels by the side-scene, and pulls the napkin out of his pocket; part of which must be seen when he enters.*]

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir Gil. Where are you, sister? Zounds! what's the matter now? What, are you acting? Have you got the touch?

Har. Humour the thought, Madam. [*Aside.*]

Sir Gil. If Diggery had not been one of the *dramatis personæ*, I should have imagined, sister Bridget, that a red coat and a handsome young fellow were things not very disagreeable to you.

Dig. Yes, Sir, I'm here; I'm always your honour's *persona*.

Sir

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Sir Gil. Get out of my sight this moment, thou—

[*Exit Diggery.*]

Har. Diggery here! that may be lucky. [*Aside.*]

Miss Brid. Indeed, brother, I do not think, that acting is so foolish a thing as I thought; for the Captain here has repeated so many pretty speeches, that I could listen to them for an hour longer. However, I will go and prepare tea for you—Good b'ye. [*Exit.*]

Har. Miss Bridget has very kindly undertaken, Sir, to perform the part of Mrs Peachum, in this evening's entertainment; and as she takes the part at a short notice, we must indulge her with the book. I shall make a proper apology to the audience upon that occasion before the opera begins.

Sir Gil. Mrs Peachum! What, has my sister undertaken to play Mother Peachum?

Har. Most kindly, Sir,

Sir Gil. She has! then I shall not be surpris'd if I see my she-goat and all her family dancing the Hayes to-morrow morning—in short, after that, I should not be surpris'd at any thing. But tell me, my dear Stukely, tell me truly, do you think that you will be able to give them enough of it? Do you think our plan will succeed?

Har. I'll be bound for it, Sir. If there are any more plays acted in your house after this, I will consent to lose my head.

Sir Gil. Then give them as much of it to-night as you can—Do not spare them, Stukely. But come, let us go in to tea. Diggery is hard at work, fixing the scenes in the hall, and the whole neighbourhood will be here by-and-bye. Come along. [*Excunt, talking.*]

SCENE, *A room in the House.*

Enter Kitty, singing.

Kit. This Charles, notwithstanding my singing, now and then makes me melancholy. He is so lively, and so tragic, and so comic, and so humourfome, and so every thing like myself, that I am much happier with him than any body else. Heigh ho! What makes me sigh so, when I choofe singing?—Tol, lol, lol, la—But here he is.

En-

Enter Charles.

Cha. Come to my arms, thou loveliest of thy sex!

Kit. Keep off, Charles, I bid you; you must not lay hold on me in such a monstrous way; that's just like Cy-mon.

Cha. What do I hear? Death to my hopes, Cy-mon! Does Cy-mon lay hold of my dear Kitty!

Kit. To be sure. When I have no other person to re-bearse with, I do take Cy-mon; and he does not perform badly, when I instruct him.

Cha. But don't you think you had better take me? Don't you imagine my performance would please you better than his?

Kit. How can I tell, until I try you both. If you will give me a specimen, I'll soon tell you—Try now.

Cha. What the devil shall I say? I do not immediately recollect a line of a play. No matter, the first thing that comes into my head. [*Aside.*

Come then, Kitty, you must play with me. Now mind me—Hear me, thou fairest of the fair—hear me, dear goddess, hear—

Kit. Stop, stop; I do not know where that is.

Cha. Nor I, upon my soul. [*Aside.*] What, do you not recollect where that is?

Kit. No. Can you repeat a speech out of Romeo, Crook-back'd Richard, the Conscious Lovers, Scrub, the Journey to London, the Clandestine Marriage, the School for Wives—

Cha. Stop, stop; yes, yes, Kitty, I have the Journey to London, the Clandestine Marriage, and the School for Wives, strong at this moment in my recollection. I think I can do—

Kit. What then, you only think, you're not certain? Lord, Lord! I do not believe you can do any thing—Why, Cy-mon, could say them all without missing a word. I only desired him, after supper, a few nights ago, to go into the barn, and get by heart the speech where the blackamoor smothers his wife; and I had not been in bed ten minutes when he came into the room, and repeated every word of it.

Cha. The devil he did!

Kit. Ay, and more than that.

Cha.

Cha. What more, in the devil's name?

Kit. Why to be sure, he was as black as old Harry, that's certain. He had black'd all his face with soot and goose-dripping; and he did look so charmingly frightful! But then he did play so well—He laid down the candle, and came up to the bed-side, and said—"One kifs, and then."

Cha. What then?

Kit. Why then "put out the light." Why, Charles, you know no more how to act this scene than Tippet.

Cha. And, pray, my dear Kitty, what does Sir Gilbert say to all this?

Kit. Why, he'd never known a word of it, if it was not that it discovered itself.

Cha. How came that? You tell me it was but a few nights ago, and I do not think it could discover itself so soon.

Kit. Why, you must know, that when Cymon kissed me in bed, he blacked my left cheek so abominably, that when I came down to breakfast in the morning, the family were all frightened out of their wits. Mrs Bridget bid me go to the glass; and when I looked at myself—Lord, Lord, how I did laugh! I told them the whole story. And do you know, that I am locked into my room every night since.

Cha. So much the better. This is simplicity without vice. [*Aside.*—Well, Kitty, you shall see this evening, how I'll play Captain Macheath. I am quite perfect in the Captain.

Kit. And I have Polly every morsel of her—Lord, how all the country-folks will stare! Miss Fanny Blubber, the rich farmer's daughter in the next village, is to play Lucy; she will do it charmingly, and, as luck would have it, she is now big with child.

Cha. Really! was ever any thing so lucky?

Kit. Are you sure now, that you will not be out?

Cha. You shall see now—Come, lean on my shoulder—Look fond—quite languishing—That will do.—What do you say now? Have you forgot?

Kit. That I hav'n't—"And are you as fond as ever, my dear?"

Cha. Suspect my honour, my courage; suspect any thing

thing but my love. May my pistols want charging, and my mare slip her shoes—No, I'm wrong—Zounds! Oh, I have it—"May my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder while I am pursued, if ever I forsake thee."

Kit. Oh, thou charming, charming creature!

[*Kisses him.*]

Cha. Damme, but this girl has given me the touch I believe. She has set me all in a flame. [*Aside.*—But tell me, Kitty, have you thought upon what I said to you in the garden?

Kit. 'Egad I have; but I don't know what's the matter with me; something comes across me, and frightens all my inclination away.

Cha. Be resolute, my dear Kitty, and take to your arms the man who only can live when he is in your presence. Heav'ns! is it possible, that such a girl as you—a creature formed—

Kit. Lord! am I a creature?

Cha. Ay, and a lovely creature; formed for the delight of our sex, and the envy of your's. To be cag'd up in such a damn'd old barn as this! seeing no company but Cymon, Wat, Diggery, Ducklin, and such cannibals!

Kit. Oh, monstrous!

Cha. 'Tis more than monstrous; 'tis shocking.

Kit. Is it indeed!

Cha. To be sure.

Lit. Then I will do as you bid me from this moment.

Cha. Come to my arms, and let me hold thee to my heart for ever. [*Embraces her.*] "If I were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy; for I fear my soul hath her content so absolute, that not another comfort like this succeeds in unknown fate."

Enter Sir Gilbert.

Sir Gil. Hollo! what the devil, are you two at it already? Why, Charles, are you not afraid she will bite you?

Cha. Not in the least, Sir. If I don't make her out of humour with this kind of mumming, before she is twenty-four hours older, I will forfeit my commission.

Sir

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Sir Gil. If you do, I promise you a better. What noise is that? [*A board is heard sawing without.*]

Kit. It is only Diggery sawing a trap-hole in the floor of the hall. You know we can't play tragedy without it.

Sir Gil. Death and hell! we shall have the house about our ears presently—Mercy upon us!—Diggery, thou imp of the devil, give over. Charles, do you stop him. [*Exit Charles.*] Who could have thought of such an infernal scheme?

Re-enter Charles.

'O Charles, Charles! curc the family of this madness, and I will make your fortune for you."

Cha. He had only began his work, there can be no mischief done, Sir.

Sir Gil. Thank you, thank you, Charles. As for you, Miss Kitty, do you come with me; the folks will be all here presently.

[*Sir Gilbert puts her arm under his; she seizes Charles's hand, and imitates the scene in the Beggar's Opera where Peachum drags his daughter from Macheath.*]

Kit. "Do not tear him from me." Isn't that right, Charles?

Cha. Astonishing!

Sir Gil. What the devil's the matter now?

Kit. [*Sings*] "Oh, Oh, ray! Oh, Ambora! Oh, "Oh!"

[*Exeunt Sir Gil. and Kitty.*]

Cha. Well, certainly there does not exist such an unaccountable family as this. As to the girl, she is a composition of shrewdness and simplicity; and if properly treated, would make an excellent wife. She has thirty thousand pounds to her fortune, and every shilling at her disposal. What an old curmudgeon is my uncle, who might provide for his nephew, without putting a shilling out of his own pocket, by bestowing this girl upon him; and never once to hint at such an union—No matter—I'll take this little charming girl to my arms, and make a *coup de main* of it. "Then, farewell the neighing steed; and the shrill trumpet; the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife, the royal banner, and all quality, pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war."

Enr.

Enter Harry.

r. Bravo, bravo, Charles! The touch, I fancy, one round the whole family.

a. 'Egad, I believe so too, Harry. I have got it, ind.

r. I have been looking for you this half hour. Such as I have had with old Moufer!

a. Ay, but such a scene as I have had with the
r. 'Egad, Harry! I have her, in spite of all her
—But who do you think popp'd upon us at the
al moment?

r. Critical moment!

a. Just as I had the lovely girl in my arms, repeat-
to her the first speech that came into my head, in
'd old Jowler, my uncle.

r. Why, he caught me much in the same situation
: garden? I was kneeling, kissing Miss Bridget's
arm'd withered fist, and swearing by all the god-
, their friends and relations, when plump he came
as: no mischief ensued; for he thought I was gi-
her a specimen of my abilities in acting. She hu-
ed the idea as completely as if she had but just
from a London boarding-school; and the good
night desired me, to surfeit her, to give her a little
of it.

a. "This night makes me, or undoes me quite."

r. Good again, Charles——Damme but I think
would make a tolerable actor in good earnest.

a. I think I should; and you will shortly have a
men of my abilities, in the character of a good hus-

Enter William, with a Letter.

ill. I received this letter, Sir, from a hostler, who
goes to an inn in the next village; he waits for an-
er Sir.

a. What can this mean? I know no person here-
to, except my uncle's family. Let us see. [*Reads.*
I this moment heard you was in the country upon
visit at your uncle's; and as I propose staying here
-night, (being heartily fatigued with my journey),
ll be much obliged, if you will favour me with your
mpany to supper: I am alone; but if the family
xl. IV. A a "can-

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" cannot spare you, I must insist you will use no ceremony with your old and sincere friend,

" JOE TACKUM."

Angels catch the sounds!

Har. With all my heart—but what's the matter?

Cha. Who do you think is by accident arrived at the next village?

Har. Who, who?—You put me in a fever.

Cha. Joe Tackum, my old fellow-collegian who took orders not a month ago, and who, I suppose, is now going to his father's—Fly, William; get me pen, ink, and paper: he must not stir from the place he now is at, to get a bishopric. [*Exeunt Charles and William.*]

Har. Let me see now; can't I find some passage that will be *à propos*? If Diggery were here, he would find twenty in a minute—Oh, I have it—"If it were done when 'tis done; then would it were done quickly—" 'tis a consummation devoutly to be wished." No, no, no, I'm all wrong—Damme, if ever I attempt to spot again while I live. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, *The Hall, with Benches fixed to see the Play.*
Sir Gilbert, Diggery, &c. are perceived bustling and receiving the company.

Sir Gil. Welcome, my good friends; welcome, ladies and gentlemen. Diggery, don't be mumbling your nonsense, but seat the company—You are all most heartily welcome—How do you like our preparation?

Comp. Oh, 'tis charming—Indeed, Sir Gilbert, 'tis charming.

Sir Gil. Don't be mumbling, Diggery, I say, but look about and observe the company. Pray, sit down all of you, or we can't begin our pastimes; the actors will be here shortly. Diggery, where's my nephew and his friend? Where's Kitty too?

Dig. She is just stepped out with Charles.

Sir Gil. Ay, ay, to rehearse their parts together, so much the better. After this night, I shall take care they have no rehearsing of their tragedies, and comedies, and love-dialogues; I'll put an end to this tinder-work business—But come, come; bustle about, Diggery, get yourself ready, and desire them all to begin;

we

we have no time to lose. Now, neighbours, you shall see the Beggar's Opera in taste.

Dig. Here they are, here they are.

Enter Charles, Kitty, and Harry.

Har. Are you sure none of the family know you are married?

Cha. Not a soul; but they shall all know it now——
[*Charles and Kitty go up to Sir Gilbert, and kneel.*] Sir, this young lady, who is now my wife, joins with me in requesting your blessing and forgiveness.

Dig. No, no, no; you are all wrong; you are to confess the marriage at the end of the third act—We begin at the wrong end. [Charles and Kitty rise.]

Enter Miss Bridget, in a rage.

Miss Brid. Brother, brother, we are all undone—— Oh, Kitty, you are a sad slut—The wench is married, brother!

Dig. Why, Mrs Bridget, you are wrong too; you are to say that by-and-bye.

Sir Gil. You came in too soon, sister Bridget; you have forgot.

Miss Brid. I tell you, brother, the wench is married—Are you stupid?

Sir Gil. I tell you again, sister Bridget, you are too soon; that rage will do well enough presently—Diggery shall tell you when to come.—This foolish woman spoils all—I have seen the Beggar's Opera a thousand times.

Miss Brid. Was ever any thing equal to this? I'll raise the neighbourhood—Murder! Robbery! Ravishment!—Bless me, how my head turns round—

[*They all rise and assist Miss Bridget, who faints in a chair.*]

Dig. I never saw any thing better acted in all my life.

Sir Gil. Very well, sister, indeed! Bounce away! I did not think it was you—Very well, indeed! ha, ha, ha!

[*Bridget shows great agitation.*]

Dig. 'Tis very fine, indeed!—I wish I may do my part half as well.

Miss Brid. I shall go mad! You crazy fool you, held your tongue, or I will—[*runs at Diggery.*] As for you, brother—

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Sir Gil. No, no; now you are out.

Dig. You should not meddle with me.

Miss Brid. I tell you, dolt, fool, that your niece there, that impudent baggage, is married to that more impudent fellow, your nephew.

Sir Gil. What is all this!

Dig. This is not in the play.

Miss Brid. No; but it is in nature for such creatures to deceive and be wicked. She is married, I tell you.

Sir Gil. The devil she is!—It is a lie though.

Dig. Then we shall have a tragedy instead of a comedy.

Sir Gil. Speak, speak, you graceless pair of impostors! What is all this?

Har. Indeed it is true, Sir Gilbert, as I can bear witness.

Sir Gil. It can't be; 'tis all a lie—Parson Dosey would not have done such a thing for his other eye, and there's no other in the neighbourhood.

Har. It was not parson Dosey, that did the kind office, but honest Joe Tackum.

Sir Gil. And pray who the devil is honest Joe Tackum?

Cha. A friend of mine, Sir, whom I detained for the purpose.

Kit. Dear guardie, forgive me for this time; and I'll never do it again.

[Knocking.]

Miss Brid. Did you ever hear any thing so profligate and destitute? Oh, you'll turn out finely, Miss!—To deceive us all—What, guilty of such an abomination, in so short a time, and at your age.

Sir Gil. What say you to that, cockatrice, in so short a time, and at your age?

Dig. I don't think it out of character, though.

[Aside.]

Kit. Pray, Madam, excuse me; is it not quite as bad to do it in so short a time, and at your age?

Miss Brid. What do you mean, you impertinent slut?

Sir Gil. Ay, what do you mean, Miss Hot-upon't?

Kit. Ask this gentleman, pray.

Sir.

Sir Gil. Why, what the devil, sister!

[*She looks confounded.*]

Har. Since I am subpoena'd into court, I must speak the truth. That lady, in *so short a time, and at her age*, offered her hand for the same trip to matrimony; but I was not in a humour for travelling.

Miss Brid. You are all a parcel of knaves, fools, and impertinent huffies—I'll never see your faces again.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Gil. You ought to be ashamed to show your own, Miss Bridget.

Dig. It is all in character:

Cha. Confider, Sir, I am your nephew, and my prosperity ought to give you pleasure: besides, I shall not want any thing from you in your will; I am now well provided for:

Sir G. 'Egad, that's a just observation. [*Aside.*—Well, as my sister, who ought to be wiser, would have done the same, I will forgive the less offence. [*Kisses her.*] Make her a good husband, Charles: and permit me to recommend one thing to you; let her never read a play, or go within the doors of a theatre; if you do, I would not underwrite her.

Cha. "My life upon her faith."

T H E CONTRIVANCES.

By HARRY CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Argus, father to Arethusa,</i>	-	<i>Crown-Garden.</i>
<i>Hearty, father to Rovewell,</i>	-	Mr Collins.
<i>Rovewell, in love with Arethusa,</i>	-	Mr Arthur.
<i>Robin, servant to Rovewell,</i>	-	Mr Lowe.
<i>First Mob,</i>	-	Mr Stoppelact.
<i>Second Mob,</i>	-	
<i>Third Mob,</i>	-	
<i>Women Mob,</i>	-	
<i>Boy.</i>	-	Mr Sattree.

W O M E N.

<i>Arethusa, in love with Rovewell,</i>	-	Mrs Chambers.
<i>Betty, her maid.</i>	-	Mrs Green.

SCENE, London.

SCENE, *Rovewell's Lodgings.*

ROBIN *solus.*

ROBIN.

WE L L, though pimping is the most honourable and profitable of all professions, it is certainly the most dangerous and fatiguing; but of all fatigues there's none like following a virtuous mistress—There's not one letter I carry, but I run the risk of kicking, caning, or pumping, nay, often hanging—Let me see; I have committed three burglaries to get one letter to her—Now, if my master should not get the gypsey at

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I, I have ventur'd my sweet person to a fair pur-
—But, Basta! here comes my master and his friend
Hearty——I must hasten and get our disguises.

And if Dame Fortune fail us now to win her,
O, all ye gods above! the devil's in her. *[Exit.]*

Enter Rowewell and Hearty.

er. Why so melancholy, Captain? Come, come,
n of your gaiety and courage shou'd never take a
pointment so much to heart.

o. 'Sdeath! to be prevented when I had brought
sign so near perfection!

ar. Were you less open and daring in your at-
s, you might hope to succeed—The old gentle-
y you know, is cautious to a degree; his daughter
a strict confinement: would you use more of the
han the lion, Fortune, perhaps, might throw an
tunity in your way—But you must have patience.

o. Who can have patience when danger is so near?
this letter, and then tell me what room there is
tience.

Hearty reads,

To-morrow will prevent all our vain struggles to
: to each other.——I am then to be marry'd, to
eternal aversion; you know the fop, 'tis Cuckoo,
o, having a large estate, is forc'd upon me; but my
urt can be none but Rowewell's. Immediately after
: receipt of this, meet Betty at the old place; there
yet one invention left; if you pursue it closely, you
y perhaps release her who wou'd be your——

“ARETHUSA.”

o. Yes, Arethusa, I will release thee, or die in
tempt. Dear friend, excuse my rudeness; you
the reason.

A. F. R.

Pll face ev'ry danger:

To rescue my dear,

For fear is a stranger

Where love is sincere.

Repulses but fire us,

Despair we despise,

If beauty inspire us

To pant for the prize.

[Exit.]
Hearty

Hear. Well, go thy way, and get her; for thou deserv'st her, o' my conscience.——How have I been deceiv'd in this boy! I find him the very reverse of what his step-mother represented him; and am now sensible it was only her ill usage that forc'd my child away—His not having seen me since he was five years old, renders me a perfect stranger to him—Under that pretence I have got into his acquaintance, and find him all I wish—If this plot of his fails, I believe my money must buy him the girl at last. [Exit.]

SCENE, *A Chamber in Argus's House.*

Arethusa sola.

A I R.

Are. See! the radiant queen of night
Sheds on all her kindly beams;
Gilds the plains with cheerful light,
And sparkles in the silver streams.
Smiles adorn the face of Nature,
Tasteless all things yet appear,
Unto me a hapless creature,
In the absence of my dear.

Enter Argus.

Arg. Pray, daughter, what linguo is that same you chant and sputter out at this rate?

Are. English, Sir,

Arg. English, quotha! adod I took it to be nonsense.

Are. 'Tis a hymn to the Moon.

Arg. A hymn to the Moon! I'll have none of your hymns in my house—Give me the book, housewife.

Are. I hope, Sir, there is no crime in reading a harmless poem.

Arg. Give me the book, I say; poems, with a pox! what are they good for, but to blow up the fire of love, and make young wenches wanton?——But I have taken care of you, mistress! for to-morrow you shall have a husband to stay your stomach, and no less a person than 'squire Cuckoo.

Are. You will not, surely, be so cruel as to marry me to a man I cannot love.

Arg.

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. Why, what sort of a man wou'd you have, Mrs

A I R

Genteel in personage,
Conduct in equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free.
Brave, not romantic;
Learn'd, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This must be he.
Honour maintaining,
Meanness disdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical;
But ever true.

. Why, is not Mr Cuckoo all this? Adod he's a young fellow, and a little feather-bed doctrine will ut the Captain out of your head; and to put you his power, you shall be given over to the 'squire row.

. Surely, Sir, you will at least defer it one day.

. No, nor one hour——To-morrow morning, at of the clock precisely.——In the mean time, take the 'squire's sister is hourly expected; so pray do civil and sociable with her, and let me have none r pouts and glouts, as you tender my displeasure.

[Exit.

To-morrow is short warning; but we may be too g for you yet, old gentleman.

Enter Betty.

O Betty! welcome a thousand times! what have you seen the Captain?

y. Yes, Madam; and if you were to see him in rigging, you'd split your sides with laughing——hoyden, such a piece of country-stuff, you never r eyes on——But the petticoats are soon thrown ad if good luck attends us, you may easily conjure

Misa

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Miss Malkin, the 'squire's sister, into your own dear captain.

Are. But when will they come?

Bet. Instantly, Madam; he only stays to settle matters for our escape. He's in deep consultation with his privy-counsellor Robin, who is to attend him in the quality of a country put—They'll both be here in a moment; so let's in, and pack up the jewels, that we may be ready at once to leap into the saddle of liberty, and ride full speed to your desires.

Are. Dear Betty, let's make haste; I think every moment an age till I'm free from this bondage.

A I R.

When parents obstinate and cruel prove,
And force us to a man we cannot love,
'Tis fit we disappoint the fordid elves,
And wisely get us husbands for ourselves.

Bet. There they are—in, in.

[*A knocking without.*]

Argus from above.

Arg. You're woundy hasty, methinks, to knock at that rate—This is certainly some courtier come to borrow money, I know it by the saucy rapping of the footman—Who's at the door?

Rob. Tummos!

[*Without doors.*]

Arg. Tummos! who's Tummos? Who wou'd you speak with, friend?

Rob. With young master's vather-in-law that mun be, master *Hardguts*?

Arg. And what's your business with master *Hardguts*?

Rob. Why, young mistress is come out o' the country to see brother's wife that mun be, that's all.

Arg. Odso, the 'squire's sister; I'm sorry I made her wait so long.

[*Goes down and lets 'em in.*]

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Argus introducing Rovewell in woman's cloaths, followed by Robin as a Clown.

Arg. Save you, fair lady, you're welcome to town.
[*Rovewell curtsys.*]—A very modest maiden, truly.
—How long have you been in town?

Rob.

Rob. Why an hour and a bit or so—we just put up horses at King's-Arms yonder, and staid a crum to zee poor things feed, for your London ostlers give little enough to poor beasts; an' you stond not by 'em your zell, and see 'em fed, as soon as your back's turn'd, adod they'll cheat you afore your face.

Arg. Why how now, Clodpate? are you to speak before your mistress, and with your hat on, too? Is that your country-breeding?

Rob. Why, an' 'tis on, 'tis on, an' 'tis off, 'tis off—what cares Tummos for your false-hearted London compliments? An' you'd have an answer from young mistress, you mun look to Tummos; for she's so main bashful, she never speaks one word but her prayers, and thos'n so softly that nobody can hear her.

Arg. I like her the better for that; silence is a heavenly virtue in a woman, but very rare to be found in this wicked place.—Have you seen your brother, pretty lady, since you came to town? [*Rovewell curtsseys.*] O miraculous modesty! wou'd all women were thus! Can't you speak, Madam?

[*Rovewell curtsseys again.*]

Rob. An' you get a word from her, 'tis more nor she has spoken to us these fourscore and seven long miles; but young mistress will prate fast enough, an' you set her among your women volk.

Arg. Say'st thou so, honest fellow? I'll send her to those that have tongue enough, I'll warrant you. Here, Betty!

Enter Betty.

Take this young lady to my daughter; 'tis 'squire Cuckoo's sister; and, d'ye hear, make much of her, I charge you.

Bet. Yes, Sir—Please to follow me, Madam.

Rov. Now, you rogue, for a lie an hour and a half long, to keep the old fellow in suspense. [*Aside to Robin.*]

[*Exit with Betty.*]

Rob. Well, master! don't you think my mistress a dainty young woman?—She's wonderfully bemir'd in our country for her shapes.

Arg. Oh, she's a fine creature, indeed!—But where's the 'squire, honest friend?

Rob.

Rob. Why, one cannot find a man out in this same Londonshire, there are so many taverns and chockin houses; you may as well seek a needle in a hay fardel, as they say'n i' the country.—I was at 'squire's lodging yonder, and there was nobody but a prat apace whorson of a foot-boy, and he told me maister was at chockling-house, and all the while the vixon did nothing but taunt and laugh at me:—I'cod I could have found in my heart to have gi'n him a good wherit in the chops. So I went to one chockling-house, and t'other chockling-house, till I was quite weary; and I could see nothing but a many people supping hot suppings, and reading your gazing papers: we had much ado to find out your worship's house; the vixon boys set us o'thick side, and that side, till we were quite almost lost; as'it were not for an honest fellow that know'd your worship, and set us i' the right way.

Arg. 'Tis pity they should use strangers so; but as to your young mistress, does she never speak?

Rob. Adod, Sir, never to a mon; why, she wo'not speak to her own father, she's so main bashful.

Aug. That's strange, indeed! But how does my friend, Sir Roger? he's well, I hope?

Rob. Hearty still, Sir—He has drunk down fix fox-hunters sin last Lammas!—He holds his old course still; twenty pipes a-day, a cup of mum in the morning, a tankard of ale at noon, and three bottles of stingo at night. The same mon now he was thirty years ago; and young squire Yedward is just come from varfity; lawd, he's mainly grow'd sin you saw him: he's a fine proper tall gentleman now; why he's near upon as tall as you or I, mun.

Arg. Good now, good now! But would'ft drink, honest friend?

Rob. I don't care an' I do, a bit or so; for, to say truth, I'm mortal dry.

Arg. Here, John!

Enter Servant.

Take this honest fellow down, and make him welcome. When your mistress is ready to go, we'll call you.

Rob. Ah! pray take care and make much of me, for
I

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I am a bitter honest fellow and you did but know me.

[Exit Robin with Serv.

Arg. These country fellows are very blunt, but very honest. I wou'd fain hear his mistress talk. He said she'd find her tongue when she was amongst those of her own sex.—I'll go listen for once, and hear what the young tits have to say to one another. [Exit.

Enter Rovewell, Arethusa, and Betty.

Rov. Dear Arethusa, delay not the time thus, your father will certainly come in and surprise us.

Bet. Let us make hay while the sun shines, Madam : I long to be out of this prison.

Are. So do I ; but not on the Captain's conditions, to be his prisoner for life.

Rov. I shall run mad if you trifle thus : name your conditions ; I sign my consent before-hand. [Kisses her,

Are. Indeed, captain, I'm afraid to trust you.

A I R.

Cease to persuade,

Nor say you love sincerely ;

When you've betray'd,

You'll treat me most severely,

And fly what once you did pursue.

Happy the fair

Who ne'er believes you,

But gives despair,

Or else deceives you,

And learns inconstancy from you.

Rov. Unkind Arethusa ! I little expected this usage from you.

A I R.

When did you see

Any falsehood in me,

That thus you unkindly suspect me ?

Speak, speak your mind ;

For I fear you're inclin'd,

In spite of my truth, to reject me.

If it must be so,

To the wars I will go,

Where danger my passion shall smother ;

I'd rather perish there,

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Than linger in despair,
Or see you in the arms of another.

Enter Argus behind.

Arg. So, so, this is as it should be; they are as gracious as can be already——How the young tit smuggles her! Adod, she kisses with a hearty good-will.

Are. I must confess, Captain, I am half inclin'd to believe you.

Arg. Captain! how's this! bless my eye-sight! I know the villain now; but I'll be even with him.

Bet. Dear Madam, don't trifle so; the parson's at the very next door, you'll be tack'd together in an instant; and then I'll trust you to come back to your cage again, if you can do it with a safe conscience.

Arg. Here's a treacherous jade! but I'll do your business for you, Mrs Jezebel.

Bet. Consider, Madam, what a life you lead here; what a jealous, ill-natured, watchful, covetous, barbarous, old cuff of a father you have to deal with——What a glorious opportunity this is, and what a sad, sad, very sad thing it is to die a maid!

A I R.

'Would you live a stale virgin for ever?

'Sure you're out of your senses,

'Or these are pretences;

'Can you part with a person so clever?

'In troth you are highly to blame.

'And you, Mr Lover, to trifle;

'I thought that a soldier,

'Was wiser and bolder!

'A warrior should plunder and rifle;

'A captain! Oh, fie for shame!

Arg. If that jade dies a maid, I'll die a martyr.

Bet. In short, Madam, if you stay much longer, you may repent it every vein in your heart——The old hunk will undoubtedly pop in upon us and discover all, and then we're undone for ever.

Arg. You may go to the devil for ever, Mrs Impudence.

Are. Well, Captain, if you shou'd deceive me.

Rev.

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Rov. If I do, may heaven——

Are. Nay, no swearing, Captain, for fear you should prove like the rest of your sex.

Rov. How can you doubt me, Arethusa, when you know how much I love you?

Arg. A wheedling dog! But I'll spoil his sport anon.

Bet. Come, come away, dear Madam!—I have the jewels; but stay, I'll go first, and see if the coast be clear.

[*Argus meets her.*]

Arg. Where are you a-going, pretty maiden?

Bet. Only do—do—do—down stairs, Sir.

Arg. And what hast thou got there, child?

Bet. Nothing but pi—pi—pi—pins, Sir.

Arg. Here, give me the pins, and do you go to hell, Mrs Minx. D'ye hear, out of my house this moment; these are chamber-jades, forsooth——*O tempora! O mores!* what an age is this? Get you in, forsooth, I'll talk with you anon. [*Exit Arethusa.*] So, Captain, are those your regimental cloaths? I'll assure you they become you mightily. If you did but see yourself now, how much like a hero you look! *Ecce signum!* 'ha! ha! ha!

Rov. Blood and fury! stop your grinning, or I'll stretch your mouth with a vengeance.

Arg. Nay, nay, captain Belfwagger, if you're so passionate, 'tis high time to call aid and assistance: here, Richard, Thomas, John; help me to lay hold on this fellow; you have no sword now; captain, no sword, d'ye mark me?

Enter Servants and Robin.

Rov. But I have a pistol, Sir, at your service.

[*Pulls out a pistol.*]

Arg. O Lord! O Lord!

Rov. And I'll unload it in your breast, if you stir one step after me.

Arg. A bloody-minded dog! But lay hold on that rogue there, that country-cheat.

Rob. See here, gentlemen; are two little bull-dogs of the same breed, [*presenting two pistols;*] they are wonderful scourers of the brain;—so that if you offer to molest or follow me—you understand me, gentlemen; you understand me.

1. Ser. Yes, yes, we understand you, with a pox.

B b 2

2 Ser.

2 *Ser.* The devil go with 'em, I say.

Arg. Ay, ay, good-by to you, in the devil's name.
—A terrible dog! what a fright he has put me in!—
I shan't be myself this month. And you, ye cowardly rascals, to stand by and see my life in danger; get out, ye slaves, out of my house, I say—I'll put an end to all this; for I'll not have a servant in the house.—I'll carry all the keys in my pocket, and never sleep more. What a murdering son of a whore is this! But I'll prevent him; for to-morrow she shall be marry'd certainly, and then my furious gentleman can have no hopes left.—A Jezebel, to have a red-coat without any money!—Had he but money, if he wanted sense, manners, or even manhood itself, it matter'd not a pin;—but to want money is the devil! Well, I'll secure her under lock and key till to-morrow; and if her husband can't keep her from captain-hunting, e'en let her bring him home a fresh pair of horns ev'ry time she goes out upon the chace.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Arethusa discover'd sitting melancholy on a couch.

A I R.

O leave me to complain
My loss of liberty;
I never more shall see my swain,
Nor ever more be free.
O cruel, cruel Fate!
What joy can I receive,
When in the arms of one I hate,
I'm doom'd, alas! to live?
Ye pitying pow'rs above,
That see my soul's dismay,
O! bring me back the man I love,
Or take my life away.

Enter Argus.

Arg. So, lady! you're welcome home!—See how the pretty turtle sits moaning the loss of her mate!—What, not a word, Thufy? not a word, child? Come, come, don't be in the dumps now, and I'll fetch the captain, or the squire's sister; perhaps they may make it prattle a bit—Ah, ungracious girl! Is all my care come to this? Is this the gratitude you show your uncle's

uncle's memory, to throw away what he had bustled so hard for at so mad a rate? Did he leave you 12,000 l. think you, to make you no better than a soldier's trull? to follow a camp? to carry a knapsack? This is what you'd have, Mistress, is it not?

Ara. This, and ten thousand times worse, were better with the man I love, than to be chain'd to the nauseous embraces of one I hate.

Arg. A very dutiful lady, indeed! I'll make you sing another song to-morrow; and till then, I'll leave you *in salvo custodia* to consider.—B'ye, Thufy!

Ara. How barbarous is the covetousness and caution of ill-natur'd parents! They toil for estates with a view to make posterity happy; and then, by mistaken prudence, they match us to our aversion. But I am resolved not to suffer tamely, however.—They shall see, though my body's weak, my resolution's strong; and I may yet find spirit enough to plague them.

A I R.

Sooner than I'll my love forego,
And lose the man I prize,
I'll bravely combat ev'ry woe,
Or fall a sacrifice.
Nor bolts, nor bars, shall me controul,
I death and danger dare;
Restraint but fires the active soul,
And urges fierce despair.
The window now shall be my gate,
I'll either fall or fly;
Before I live with him I hate,
For him I love I'll die.

[Adieu.]

SCENE, *The Street.*

“Hearty and Rowewell meeting.”

“*Row.* So, my dear friend, here already?—This is very kind.

“*Hear.* Sure, Captain, this lady must have some extraordinary merit for whom you undertake such difficulties! What are her particular charms besides her money?”

“*Row.* I'll tell you, Sir.

B b 2

AIR.

'A I R. *The words by another hand.*

- Without affectation, gay, youthful, and pretty;
- Without pride or meanness, familiar and witty;
- Without forms, obliging, good-natur'd, and free;
- Without art, as lovely as lovely can be.
- She acts what she thinks, and she thinks what she says.
- Regardless alike both of censure and praise;
- Her thoughts, and her words, and her actions, are such,
- That none can admire 'em, or praise her too much.

'Hear. Well, success attend you——You know
 • where to find me when there's occasion? [Exit.]

Enter Rowswell and Boy.

Boy. Sir, Sir! I want to speak with you.

Row. Is your mistress lock'd up, say you?

Boy. Yes, Sir, and Betty's turn'd away, and all the men-servants; and there's no living soul in the house but our old cook-maid, and I, and my master, and Mrs Thusy; and she cries, and cries her eyes out almost.

Row. O the tormenting news! But if the garrison is so weak, the castle may be the sooner storm'd. How did you get out?

Boy. Through the kitchen-window, Sir.

Row. Show me the window presently.

Boy. Alack-a-day, it won't do, Sir! That plot won't take!

Row. Why, firrah?

Boy. You are something too big, Sir.

Row. I'll try that, however.

Boy. Indeed, Sir, you can't get your leg in; but I could put you in a way.

Row. How, dear boy?

Boy. I can lend you the keys of Mrs Thusy's chamber——If you can contrive to get into the house——But you must be sure to let my mistress out.

Row. How could'st thou get it? This is almost a miracle.

Boy. I pick'd it out of my master's coat-pocket this morning, Sir, as I was a-brushing him.

Row. That's my boy! there's money for you: this child will come to good in time.

Boy.

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Boy. My master will miss me, Sir; I must go; but I wish you good luck. [Exit.]

A I R.

Arethusa at the window above.

A dialogue between her and Rovewell.

Rev. Make haste and away, my only dear;

Make haste, and away, away!

For all at the gate,

Your true lover does wait,

And I prithee make no delay.

Are. O how shall I steal away, my love?

O how shall I steal away?

My daddy is near,

And I dare not for fear;

Pray, come then another day.

Rev. O this is the only day, my life,

O this is the only day!

I'll draw him aside,

While you throw the gates wide,

And then you may steal away.

Are. Then prithee make no delay, my dear;

Then prithee make no delay:

We'll serve him a trick;

For I'll slip in the nick,

And with my true love away.

C H O R U S.

O Cupid, befriend a loving pair,

O Cupid, befriend us, we pray!

May our stratagems take,

For thine own sweet sake;

And, Amen! let all true lovers say.

[Arethusa withdraws.]

Enter Robin as a lawyer, and soldiers.

Rob. So, my hearts of oak, are you all ready?

Sold. Yes, an't please your honour.

Rev. You know your cue, then—to your post.

[They retire to a corner of the stage; he knocks smartly at the door.]

Rob. What, are you all asleep, or dead in the house, that you can't hear?

[Argus, holding the door in his hand.]

Arg.

Arg. Sir, you are very hasty, methinks—

Rob. Sir, my business requires haste.

Arg. Sir, you had better make haste about it, for I know no business you have here.

Rob. Sir, I am come to talk with you on an affair of consequence.

Arg. Sir, I don't love talking; I know you not, and consequently can have no affairs with you.

Rob. Sir, not know me!

Arg. Sir, 'tis enough for me to know myself.

Rob. A damn'd thwarting old dog this same. [*Aside.*] Sir, I live but just in the next street. [*To him.*]

Arg. Sir! if you liv'd at Jamaica, 'tis the same thing to me.

Rob. [*Aside.*] I find coaxing won't do, I must change my note, or I shall never unkennel this old fox—[*To him.*] Well, Mr Argus, there's no harm done, so take your leave of 3000 l. You have enough of your own already. [*Going.*]

Arg. How, 3000 l.! I must inquire into this. [*Aside.*] Sir, a word with you.

Rob. Sir! I have nothing to say to you. I took you to be a prudent person, that knew the worth of money, and how to improve it; but I find I'm deceiv'd.

Arg. Sir, I hope you'll excuse my rudeness; but, you know, a man cannot be too cautious.

Rob. Sir, that's true, and therefore I excuse you; but I'd take such treatment from no man in England besides yourself.

Arg. Sir, I beg your pardon; but to the business.

Rob. Why thus it is: a spendthrift young fellow is galloping thro' a plentiful fortune: I have lent 2000 l. upon it already; and if you'll advance an equivalent, we'll fore-close the whole estate, and share it between us; for I know he can never redeem it.

Arg. A very judicious man; I'm sorry I affronted him. [*Aside.*] But how is this to be done?

Rob. Very easily, Sir.—A word in your ear; a little more this way.

[*Draws him aside; the soldiers get between him and the door.*]

Arg. But the title, Sir, the title?

Rob.

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Rob. Do you doubt my veracity?

Arg. Not in the least, Sir; but one cannot be too sure.

Rob. That's very true, Sir; and therefore I'll make sure of you now I have you.

[Robin trips up his heels; the soldiers blindfold and gag him, and stand over him, while Rowewell carries Arethusa off; after which they leave him, he making a great noise.]

Enter Mob.

All. What's the matter, what's the matter?

[They ungag him, &c.]

Arg. O neighbours, I'm robb'd and murder'd, ruin'd and undone for ever.

1 Mob. Why, what's the matter, master?

Arg. There's a whole legion of thieves in my house; they gagg'd and blindfolded me, and offer'd forty naked swords at my breast—I beg of you assist me, or they'll strip the house in a minute.

2 Mob. Forty drawn swords, say you, Sir?

Arg. Ay, and more, I think, on my conscience.

2 Mob. Then look you, Sir, I'm a marry'd man, and have a large family, I wou'd not venture amongst such a parcel of blood-thirsty rogues for the world; but if you please, I'll run and call a constable.

All. Ay, ay, call a constable, call a constable.

Arg. I shan't have a penny left, if we stay for a constable—I am but one man; and, as old as I am, I'll lead the way, if you'll follow me.

[Going in.]

All. Ay, ay, in, in, follow, follow; huzza!

1 Mob. Prithce, Jack, do you go in, if you come to that.

4 Mob. I go in! what shou'd I go in for? I have lost nothing.

Wom. What, nobody to help the poor old gentleman? odds bobs! if I was a man, I'd follow him myself.

3 Mob. Why don't you, then? What occasionableness have I to be kill'd for him or you either?

Enter Robin as Constable.

All. Here's Mr Constable, here's Mr Constable.

Rob. Silence, in the King's name.

All.

All. Ay, silence, silence.

Rob. What's the meaning of this riot? Who makes all this disturbance?

1 *Mob.* I'll tell you, Mr Constable.

3 *Mob.* An't please your worship, let me speak.

Rob. Ay, this man talks like a man of parts—What's the matter, friend?

3 *Mob.* An't please your noble worship's honour and glory, we are his Majesty's liege subjects, and were terrify'd out of our habitations and dwelling-places by a cry from abroad; which your noble worship must understand was occasionable by the gentleman of this house, who was so unfortunate as to be killed by thieves, who are now in his house to the numberation of above forty, an't please your worship, all completely arm'd with powder and ball, back-swords, pistols, bayonets, and blunderbusses.

Rob. But what is to be done in this case?

3 *Mob.* Why, an please your worship, knowing your noble honour to be the King's Majesty's noble officer of the peace, we thought 'twas best your honour shou'd come and terrify these rogues away with your noble authority.

Rob. Well said, very well said, indeed!—Gentlemen, I am the King's officer; and I command you in the King's name to aid and assist me to call those rogues out of the house—Who's within there? I charge you come out in the King's name, and submit yourselves to our royal authority,

Argus from the house.

2 *Mob.* This is the gentleman that was kill'd, an't please your worship.

Arg. O neighbours, I'm ruin'd and undone for ever! They have taken away all that's dear to me in the world.

1 *Mob.* That's his money; 'tis a sad covetous dog.

Rob. Why, what's the matter? What have they done?

Arg. O, they have taken my child from me, my Thufy!

Rob. Good luck!

3 *Mob.* Marry come up, what valuation can she be? —But have they taken nothing else?

Arg.

Arg. Wou'd they had stript my house of every penny-worth, so they had left my child.

1 *Mob.* That's a lie, I believe; for he loves his money more than his soul, and wou'd sooner part with that than a groat.

Arg. This is the captain's doings; but I'll have him hang'd.

Rob. But where are the thieves?

Arg. Gone, gone, beyond all hopes of pursuit.

2 *Mob.* What, are they gone? Then, come neighbours, let us go in, and kill every mother's child of 'em.

Rob. Hold, I charge you to commit no murder; follow me, and we'll apprehend them.

Arg. Go, villains, cowards, scoundrels, or I shall suspect you are the thieves that mean to rob me of what is yet left. How brave you are, now all the danger's over? Oh, Sirrah, you dog! [*looking at Robin;*] you are that rogue Robin, the captain's man. Seize him, neighbour's, seize him!

Rob. [*aside.*] I don't care what you do, for the job's over; I see my master a-coming.

Arg. Why don't you seize him, I say?

1 *Mob.* Not we, we have lost too much time about an old fool already.

2 *Mob.* Ay, the next time you're bound and gagg'd, you shall lie and be damn'd for me.

3 *Mob.* Ay, and me too; come along, neighbours, come along.

[*Exeunt Mob.* Enter Rowewell, Hearty, Arethusa, Betty, and Robin.

Arg. Bless me! who have we got here? O Thufy! Thufy! I had rather never have seen thee again, than have found you in such company.

Are. Sir, I hope my husband's company is not criminal?

Arg. Your husband? who's your husband, housewife? that scoundrel? captain—Out of my sight, thou ungracious wretch!—I'll go make my will this instant—and you, you villain, how dare you to look me in the face after all this?—I'll have you hang'd, Sirrah; I will so.

Hearty. O fie, brother Argus, moderate your passion. It ill becomes the friendship you owe Ned Northy, to vi-
lity

lily and affront his only child, and for no other than improving that friendship which has ever been tween us.

Arg. Ha! my dear friend alive! I heard thou dead in the Indies—And is that thy son? and my g too, if I am not mistaken.

Hear. The very same—the last and best remain our family; forc'd by my wife's cruelty, and my sence, to the army. My wife is since dead, and th she had by her former husband, whom she intende heir my estate; but fortune guided me by chance t dear boy, who, after twenty year's absence, and char my name, knew me not, till I just now discovered self to him and your fair daughter, whom I will him deserve by thirty thousand pounds, which I br from India, besides what real estate I may leave hi my death.

Arg. And to match that, old boy, my dau shall have every penny of mine, besides her uncle's ey.—Ah, you young rogue, had I known you, I v not have us'd you so roughly—However, since have won my girl so bravely, take her, and welcom But you must excuse all faults—the old man mea for the best; you must not be angry.

Rev. Sir, on the contrary, we ought to beg pardon for the many disquiets we have given you; with your pardon, we crave your blessing. [*They*

Arg. You have it, children, with all my heart. dod, I am so transported, I don't know whether I or fly.

Arc. May your joy be everlasting!

Rowewell and Arethusa, embracing.

D U E T T O.

Thus fondly caressing,

My idol, my treasure,

How great is the blessing!

How sweet is the pleasure!

With joy I behold thee,

And doat on thy charms;

Thus while I unfold thee,

I've heav'n in my arms.

FLORA:

OR,
JOB IN THE WELL.

IN TWO ACTS.

By COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Sir Thomas Testy.
Friendly, a gentleman in love with *Flora*,
Job, a simple country-fellow.
Old Hob, *Hob's* father.
Nick, servant to *Friendly*.
Roger, servant to *Sir Thomas*.

W O M E N.

Flora, niece to *Sir Thomas*; in love with *Friendly*.
Betty, her maid.
Job's mother.

SCENE, in *Somersetshire*.

A C T I.

After the Overture, Flora and Betty discovered.

A I R I.

To the tune of, *At noon, one sultry summer's day.*

FLORA.

HOW wretched are we orphans made;
By dying parents wills betray'd
To guardians powers, who oft invade
Our freedom, to our cost?
Like captives they their wards confine,

Vol. IV.

C c

Pre-

ladder against the wall, I'll toss over my hand-box, venture catching cold in the dew, and take my fortune with him.

Bet. There's metal in the proposal, Madam—Let's see the letter; he shall have it in a quarter of an hour, tho' I carry it myself.

Flo. But I won't venture neither, unless his answer tells he'll be ready—So, dear Betty, be careful; I have no mortal to trust but thee.

Bet. And no mortal fitter to be trusted: [Exit.]

Flo. So, now my heart's at ease—I find my resolution's good at the bottom; and since I have set my head upon running away, 'tis not my old uncle nor the garden-wall shall stop me, tho' he were as wise as a bishop, and the wall as high as a church-steeple.

A I R IV. *Man in imagination.*

Tho' my uncle strives to immure me,

My lover's voice will lure me

To leap from the mount o'er the garden-wall,

And fly this hated place.

Oh, a tedious day to me 'tis;

But when Sol's in the arms of his Thetis,

Swift as the roe (at my hero's call)

I'll elude my hunter's chase.

Ah!——

Enter Sir Tho. Testy.

Sir Tho. How now, Mrs Irreverence? Am I such a hobgoblin, that you start at the sight of me?

Flo. Sir, I did not think any harm; but when you come upon one unawares——

Sir Tho. Unawares! What! I surpris'd you then? Your head was full of other matters, which, I suppose, that close committee of the flesh and the devil have absolutely resolv'd to be the fundamentals of your constitution.

A I R V. *As I was walking thro' Hyde-Park.*

‘When a girl fifteen years does attain,

‘Love's follies invading her brain,

‘Her virtue's held by a slight rein.

‘For equipage, hurry, and noise,

‘Gay cloathing, and such female toys,

‘She'll forego more substantial joys.

‘To

• To a feather or powder'd toupee

• Her heart soon a captive wou'd be.

• To keep such a one chaste, we must lock her up fast:

• That maxim best pleases me."

Flo. Lord, Sir, how strangely you talk to one!

Sir Tho. Talk! you malapert; why who shou'd talk to you but I? Who am I, huffy? who am I?

Flo. You are my uncle by relation, my guardian by my father's will, and my jailor against mine.

Sir Tho. Then while you are my prisoner, huffy, how dare you take such liberty?

Flo. Because liberty, Sir, is the sweetest thing a prisoner can take.

Sir Tho. Don't you think in your conscience now, mistress, you deserve to be lock'd up?

Flo. I think in my conscience, you ought to let me marry, since I've a mind to't.

Sir Tho. Provoking! Dare you own this to my face?

Flo. Why, Sir, is't a fault? You have kept me in prison for these ten mouths, and I did not know but my confessing it might deserve a little of your mercy.

Sir Tho. Astonishing! The devil has harden'd you, huffy! you are a sight! Go, go, to your chamber; people will stare at you; I would not have you seen abroad in this condition for—O Lord! your brain's turn'd! You shall bleed, mistress; I'll have your room darken'd: Water-gruel, discipline and water-gruel! ye gods!

Flo. Look'e uncle, I find you have a mind to drive me to a hard bargain; therefore, to let you see that I am no hagler, I'll make you an offer which shall fairly come up to the most you can make of me—as thus—

Sir Tho. What new distraction hast thou got in thy head now?

Flo. Hear me. You know I have 8000*l.* to my fortune; and that by my father's will you are to be allow'd the whole interest of it, 'till I am either married or of age, to reimburse your expences in maintaining me; which said maintenance, by a modest computation, may stand you in—Let me see—about seven or eight pounds a-year (for I've no cloaths but my mother's.)—Now, Sir, if you'll immediately give me the liberty of marrying the man I have a mind to, I'll engage he shall con-

sent to the throwing of my fortune into the public funds; the minute you throw me into his arms. So you shall have the use of my pence till I am of age, as a premium for advancing to him the use of my person.

Sir Tho. Hum! The girl begins to talk sensibly—But 'tis not yet proper to understand her—Look'e, child, when you have persuaded your lover to make the same proposal under his hand, I shall then believe you are equally mad to come at one another—In the mean time, let me advise you to your chamber, from whence I will allow you the lovely prospect of the garden.

[*Exit.*

Flo. You may chance to fret for this, my very wise uncle.

[*Exit.*

Enter Friendly and Servant.

Fri. What a watchful old rogue is this!

Ser. A very dragon, Sir.

Fri. To use a young creature so unmercifully.

Ser. Nay, Sir, so uncivilly.

Fri. How, firrah?

Ser. To force her to such extremities, to make her straddle over a great wall, and risk her neck down a ladder at midnight, when he ought to lend her his hand into a coach and fix, and out of his great gate at noon-day to come to you, Sir. But the rascal has no breeding.

Fri. By Mercury, I'll be even with him.

Ser. You have reason, Sir; for tho' I say it—

Fri. That shou'd not say it.

Ser. She is a lovely piece of temptation, Sir.

Fri. What's o'clock, firrah?

Ser. By the moon's rising, I believe it may be about, about, a—past ten.

Fri. Then, firrah, about past—twelve—

Ser. You'll have one of her blue silk stockings straddling over the wall, Sir—

A I R VI. *At past one o'clock, and a cold frosty morning.*

Friendly sings.

At past twelve o'clock, and a fine summer's morning,
When all in the village sleep pleasantly,

Cynthia's

Cynthia's bright beams all nature adorning
Shall guide my swift steps to my lovely she.

'Then my fair Flora, fraught with kind wishes,
I'll fold in my arms, with amorous kisses,
Which serve as preludes to more solid blisses—

Soon as the vicar has made us one.

But where's the country fellow you promis'd should carry
my answer to her letter?

Ser. Who, Hob, Sir? Here he is; and if any suspects
his face for a pimp's, I have no skill in the science, Sir.

Enter Hob.

Fri. Well, Hob, can'st thou carry this letter to Sir
Thomas Testy's house for me?

Hob. Yes, Zir, yes.

Fri. Do so, and give it to Madam Flora; but take
care nobody sees you deliver it.

Hob. Yes, Zir—But must I carry it to-night?—'Tis
main dark.

Fri. You must go immediately.

Hob. I hope, Zir, there's no difference between you
and Zir Tomas.

Fri. Why dost hope so?

Hob. Why truly, Zir, I do hear there be; and there-
fore I don't care to meddle or make between friends, for
'tis but an unthankful office; and you know Zir Tomas
is very crusty, and if he does but suspect that I shau'd
conzarn myzel, mayhap he may take the law of me; and
you know, Zir, that law is a vrightful thing.

A I R VII. *She got money by th' bargain.*

The terrible law, when it fastens its paw

On a poor man, it gripes 'till he's undone;

And what I am doing, may turn to my ruin,

'Tho' rich as the Lord Mayor of London.

Therefore I'll be wary what message I carry,

Unless we first make a zure bargain;

I will be 'demonify'd, thoroughly zatisfy'd,

That ch'am shan't zuffer a varding.

Fri. Pish, the law shall never trouble thee; I'll secure
thee from any harm.

Hob. Very well, Zir, very well; that's as much as I can
desire: but pray, don't take unkindly what I say; for
you

Hob. Going with it, Zir? I dan't know where eh'am going with it, not I.

Sir Tho. What do you here at this time o'night?

Hob. I can't tell what I do here, not I—I'll go home, Zir, if you please—I wish you a good night.

Sir Tho. Hold, hold, a little, friend; let me reward you first for bringing it, however,

Hob. Nct a varthing, Zir; indeed, I must not take one varthing, for Maister Friendly charg'n me to th' contrary; therefore, pray, dan't offer it.

Sir Tho. O, did he so?—But something I will give you, however: Pray take that, and that, firrah.

[*Beats him.*]

Hob. O Lard! O Lard! what do ye strik'n vor? avore Gad, I'll take the law of you, zee an I don't—what, do you go to murder me?

Sir Tho. I'll law you, you rogue—are you their letter-carrier? there's more for you, firrah.

Hob. Bear witness, bear witness, zee an you dan't pay for this. O Lard! O Lard!

Sir Tho. Here, firrahs, lay hold of him, till I examine the letter. Let's see—"To Mrs Flora"—right.

"The proposal you mention, in case of extremity, will certainly do; but it will be a much pleasanter piece of justice to bite him for his barbarity. [*A son of a whore, he means me to be sure.*] The ladder, and all things shall be ready exactly at twelve to-night [*Oons!*] If you have any thing farther of moment, this fellow is honest, and will convey it safe to your eternal lover,

"TOM. FRIENDLY."

Yes, yes, I find he is honest, with a pox to him, and I'll reward him accordingly—Here, desire that honest gentleman to walk down to the bottom of that well—And let him stay there 'till I call for him.

Hob. I can't do it, as I hope to be zav'd I can't; pray forbear, and don't murder an innocent man.

[*Falls on his knees.*]

A I R IX. *My father be left me a wealthy estate.*

Sings. I never 'till now was conzarn'd in strife;

Have mercy, Sir Thomas, and spare poor Hob's life,

And

HOB IN THE WELL. 311

And give me my vreedom, as I had bevore—
I'll be a good boy, and I'll do zo no more.

Indeed I won't—

Sir Tbo. In with him, I say—

Hob. O Lard! Maister Jonathan, I vorewarn you, dan't
be conzarn'd in this: Conzider what you do.

Sir Tbo. Oons! in with him.

Hob. You are all principals, there are no 'complishes
in murder. Help! Murder!

[*They put him down, and exeunt.*]

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Enter Flora.

Flo. I heard a strange noise without; I wish things go
as they shou'd—'My heart beats, as if Mr What-d'ye-
'call 'em were in my arms.'—Well, this love's a terrible
thing—Wou'd the worst on't were over, I'm afraid I
shall never be able to go thro' with it.—I am sure here's
an odd buffle about it.

Enter Betty.

How now!

Bet. Undone! undone! Madam! Your uncle has inter-
cepted Mr Friendly's letter in answer to your's, and all
your designs are discovered; he raves and tears like a
madman, and in his passion he has thrown the poor fel-
low that brought it into the great well, and swears if any
body offers to help him out, without his order, he'll throw
them in after him.

Flo. Well, if I am here alive, I thought it wou'd come
to nothing—It vexes the heart of me.

Bet. But come, Madam, don't be wholly discouraged;
for John tells me, 'tis a hundred to one but the fellow's
drown'd.

Flo. Psha! I wish my uncle was drown'd in his room.

Bet. No, Madam; but he'll be hang'd, and that's as
well.

Flo. Do you really think so?

Bet. Poz.

Flo. Then I'll marry in spite of his teeth.

Bet. Right; when he's in one noose, you may slip into
another.

Flo. Dear Betty, step out and see how 'tis with the
fellow,

fellow, for I'm in a thousand frights; and if things are—
—you know how,—ask when the affizes begin.

[Exit Betty.]

A I R X. *The last with the nut-brown hair.*

- ' To forgive, sure, is great,
- ' But revenge for wrong's sweet,
- ' So for once let resentment prevail.
- ' My guardian relation
- ' Is in a situation
- ' Should move a soft breast to bewail:
- ' But his sordid cruelty
- ' Has so perverted me,
- ' I can hear of his death without pain.
- ' When he's swinging in his shoes,
- ' I'll fix my marriage-noose,
- ' And (with justice) great Hymen shall reign;

[Exit.]

SCENE, *The Well, &c.*

Enter Old Hob and his Wife.

O. Hob. Come, wife, never trouble thyself, a wull go
a rawging zometimes, and there's an end on't, a wull
come home again I warrant 'un.

Wife. I think o' my conscience 'tis no great matter
whether he does or no.—A bafe raugue, to be out of the
way at such a busy time as thick is. The zun has been
up this hour and quarter, and that grauceless boy, I
warrant, has not been a-bed yet. Prithee, husband, step
and zee a'n he be'nt zooting at the park-gate, and I'll
draw the water in the mean time.

O. Hob. Do you then.

[Exit.]

Wife. This boy's the plague of my life, I think—
'twere more than time the gammon had been boiled by
now. And now the volk will come to the wake bevore
he be cold—and then it wau'n't be vit to be eaten.—A
jackanapes! when I bid 'en, and beg 'en, and prayed 'en
to stay, and he wou'd go—And yet notwithstanding all
I have zaid, cou'd I lay eyes on him, I shau'd vorget his
roguery, and vorgiv'n.

A I R XI. *The Logan water is so deep.*

Sings. The shepherdess with looks dismayed,
Because her fav'rite lamb has stray'd;

In angry search her time employs!
 But found—that passion's lost in joys.
 So will it be with silly me,
 When next my truant-boy I see;
 My heart pleads strongly on his side,
 And I shall rather kiss than chide.

I here have I been blaming the poor boy for not minding
 is business, and at the same time neglect my own; I
 must haste to wind up the bucket, or I shall have husband
 ask before I've drawn a drop of water.

[*Goes to the well, and sings; Did you not hear, &c.*
 And, lud, 'tis main heavy—Heyday—I believe old Nick's
 at the bottom o' the bucket, for my part. [*Hob cries out.*]
 Oh, a ghost! a ghost!

[*Hob appears in the bucket; she lets the rope go, and
 - he sinks again.*

Enter Old Hob.

O. Hob. Heyday! what's the matter, with a murrain
 ye? is the woman in her tantrums?

Wife. A ghost! a ghost!—Hob's ghost in the well—
 !—

O. Hob. The woman's turn'd vool, I think—let me
 e; if the devil be in the well, I'll vetch 'en out on't—
 ere's a rout indeed—Wauns! I think the devil be in the
 icket.—But now I have got 'en half way, I'll knaw
 hat zort of a devil 'tis; and if he ben't a zivil one, I'll
 uze 'en and zop 'en in the bottom agen.

T. Hob. Ah! hau'd vast, vather, 'tis I! 'tis I!

Wife. Ah! 'tis there agen.

O. Hob. Haud your peace, I zay; the devil can't get in
 word for you, I think—Who's there? Hob?

T. Hob. Ay, vor lov's zake pull away, vather.

O. Hob. Prithce lend's thy hond, wife—Bless my eyes!
 s Hob indeed—What in the name of wonder dost thou
 re, lad?

T. Hob. Ah! dan't ask questions now, vather—get
 e home—Zir Tomas has don't; but if there be law in
 l the king's kingdom, I'll capias 'en vor zartain; I
 in't knaw but it may prove the death of me; I'll zue
 m next hizi-prizis, an't cost me vorty shillings. I'll
 ie him, come on't what will—zee if I don't make him
 iy vor't.

AIR XII. *To an Irish tune.* Trio.

Wife. Oh! my poor boy,

O. Hob. His looks are stark wild.

Wife. Cou'd Sir Tomas destroy

O. Hob. So hopeful a child?

K. Hob. I'll revenge if I can.

Wife. Ah! talk so no more.

O. Hob. He's a great mon,

O. Hob. and Wife. And we are but poor.

T. Hob. All you do say can signify nothing,

I'll capias 'en vor't, let cost what it will.

Wife. Go to bed, boy, whilst I get thee dry clothing.

O. Hob. Think thou art taught to return good for ill?

T. Hob. I'll indict 'en i' th' crown,

And bind o'er to the sessions,

Tho'f I sell my heifer and the auld mare,

Uddfblead I'd hang 'en or drown 'en.

O. Hob. Forbear such expressions.

Wife. Prithee vorgeive, and be not zevere.

T. Hob. I'll never vorgeive, and will be zevere.

Wife. Oh, poor Hob! come along, child, and I'll get thee a little zugar-zops to comfort thy bowels.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II.

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Enter Sir Thomas and Servant.

SIR THOMAS.

JOHN, what's become of the fellow that fell into the well last night? has any body taken any care of him?

Ser. No, Sir; your worship said he should lie there till your worship was pleased to call for him——

Sir Tho. Oons, sirrah, you have not drown'd the fellow, have you?

Ser. Who, I drown him, Sir! nay, nay, hau'd yee, I am but a servant, and 'twas you bad me; an any mischief shou'd come on't, 'tis you must answer it—Flesh! what have I to do with it?

Sir Tho. You impudent rogue, wou'd you put your villanies upon me? Did not I see you collar him, did not

you

you lay violent hands upon him, firrah, and am not I a witness against you?

Ser. Lard! Lard! at this rate a man had as good be a galley-slave as a servant—If one don't do as one's bid, one's head's broke; and if one does, one's to be hang'd for't—But come what will, the gallows will hold two, that's the best on't.

Sir Tho. He says true, faith—Well, well, keep your own counsel, firrah, and I'll see what I can do to save you.

Ser. Nay, nay, as for that, do you see, do as you see cause—let it go thick way, or let it go thack way, 'tis all a case to me go which way it will; one good turn will require another.

Sir Tho. Hold your peace, firrah—and begone—
[Exit Servant.] This surly dog is not to be frightened, I see; I must (as is customary with a man in power) protect this fellow in his roguery for my own sake.

‘A I R XIII. *I have left the world as the world
found me.*

Sir Thomas sings.

- ‘A rogue that is hired
- ‘To do what's required,
- ‘And ne'er stick at honour or conscience
- ‘To compass his ends,
- ‘Will destroy his best friends,
- ‘For a villain's sure friendship is nonsense.
- ‘Yet still he may laugh,
- ‘Well assur'd he is safe,
- ‘And despise all attempts to accuse him;
- ‘For his patron oft-times
- ‘Promoting his crimes,
- ‘Must (for self preservation) excuse him.’

Enter Servant with a letter.

Ser. Sir, here's a letter for you.

Sir Tho. Who brought it?

Ser. Mr Friendly's-man, Sir.

Sir Tho. Let's see.

[Reads:

“Sir, Your niece informs me, that she has made you
“a proposal concerning our marriage, which I am

“willing to ratify whenever you please to do me
“the honour of a meeting. Your’s.

Humph! that meeting may be to meet with my niece, for ought I know—I must have the particulars under his hand before I seem to understand him: Therefore, that I don’t understand him, shall be my answer.—In the mean time I’ll put on a smother look to the girl, and show her a little of the country-diversion from the mount in the garden; and if they are in earnest, that good-humour will work her to work him up to my price.—Bid the fellow stay ’till I write him an answer.

[Exit.

SCENE, *The Wood and Garden-wall.*

Enter Old Hob and Wife.

Wife. Come, husband, now the boy has got on his dry cloaths, let him be stirring a bit—Come, come, make haste, the town will be full of volk bevore we shall get visted.

O. Hob. Don’t trouble thyself, wife; every thing within doors is ready, and there’s nothing wanting but the sign to be put up; and look’ye, that shall be done present—Hob! Hob!

T. Hob. [within.] What zay you, father?

O. Hob. Tap the ale, quick, quick.

T. Hob. Ay, ay, vather.

O. Hob. There—now he that will drink good ale, let him come to the sign of the pot-lid—Come, wife, let’s to our business within.

[Exeunt.

Enter Friendly, disguised; Servant, and Country-people.

Fri. If this disguise does not conceal me—

Ser. You’ll then be out of countenance to no purpose, Sir—But, pray, Sir, what do you propose by turning ballad-finger?

Fri. I do propose that Flora shall know me by my voice, and that consequently her wits will soon be at work to come at me.

Ser. Well, Sir, but of what use can I be? for I can no more sing than I can fast.

Fri. But you can help to draw other gaping fools about me.

Ser. There’s some sense in that, indeed, Sir.

Enter

Enter Sir Thomas, Flora, and Betty.

Sir Tho. Come, niece, if you must see the pastime, you may have as fair a prospect of it here as in the crowd.

Flo. I like it very well here, Sir.

Fri. Well, ho! this same is intitled, An excellent new Ballad in praise of the Country-Wake.

Sir Tho. Hark! we shall have a merry ballad.

Flo. Bless my eyes!—is not that he, Betty?

Bet. The very he, Madam—but hush.

AIR XIV. A Ballad. *Rare doings at Bath.*

Friendly sings.

I'll sing you a ditty, and warrant it true,

Give but attention unto me a while,

Of transactions at court, and in country too,

Toilsome pleasures, and pleasing toil.

Accept it (I pray) as your help-mates you take;

To some 'twill give joy,

And some others annoy:

All's fair at a country-wake. All's fair, &c.

“ At courts we see patriots noble and just,

“ Fit for employments of honour and pow'r;

“ But then there are sycophants, unfit for trust,

“ Blend with the great, and in number are more;

“ Slaves, who would honour and honesty stake,

“ With sordid intention,

“ To get place or pension:

“ Strange news at a country-wake. Strange news, &c.
Some ladies at court are styled unpolite,

Because truly virtuous, and prone to no ill;

Whilst others who sparkle in diamonds bright,

Are stript of their pride at *basset* or *quadrille*,

'Till their losses at play do their lord's credit shake;

Then, their toys to recover,

They'll grant the last favour:

Strange news at a country-wake. Strange news, &c.
Here most of our gentlemen patriots are,

Tho' very bad statesmen, I freely confess;

They design harm to none—but a fox or a hare,

And are always found loyal in war and in peace.

The farmer's industry does earth fertile make;

The husbandman's ploughing,

His planting and sowing,

Gets health and good cheer at a country-wake. Gets, &c.

Our girls blooming fair, without washes or paints,

From neighbouring villages hither resort

They kiss sweet as roses, yet virtuous as saints,

(Who can say more for the ladies at court?)

No worldly cares vex 'em, asleep or awake;

But their time they improve

In peace and true love,

And innocent mirth, at the country-wake. And, &c.

The schemes of a courtier are full of intrigue;

Here's all fair and open, dark deeds we despise:

Set rural contentment 'gainst courtly fatigue,

Who chooses the former is happy and wise.

Now let's pray for the king, and, for England's sake,

From all faction free,

May his subjects agree

As well at the court as the country-wake. As well, &c.

Do you think she knew me?

Ser. Knew you, Sir! why, I bought one of your ballads for her, and she tipt the wink upon me, with as much as to say, Desire him not to go till he hears from me.—Suppose, Sir, you took a cup of nappy here, to pass away the time a little.

Fri. Call for what you have a mind to.

Ser. Here, house! —

[*Enter Hob.*

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming. Your zarvant, Maister Friendly, I'm glad to zee you, you're welcome to the vair.

Fri. I thank you, honest Hob.

Hob. I shau'd knaw that gentleman—Maister Richard, I think?

Sar. Ay, Hob; how do'st do?

Hob. O Laird, Maister, haw d'ye do? Come, pray, zit down.—Maister Friendly—Come, pray stay, and drink one pot avore you go.

Fri. Sit down, or this fellow's impertinence will make us observ'd. What do'st thou do with an apron on, Hob?

Hob. Adod, I pu'nt on but just now; vather will do as neighbours do, and every one i' th' town almost zells

ate

ale on vair-day—but now we zell several other zorts of liquors, and wine too, an occasion be.

Fri. Wine!

Hob. Ay, all zorts of wine.

Fri. Say'st thou so? Bring us some claret then.

Hob. Claret, Zir! We have no claret; we mun not zell claret, 'tis against th' law.—Now you may ha' some o' your port, your red port now, or your white port, or such zort of stuff.

Fri. Such stuff as thou hast then, prithee bring us.

Hob. Yes, Zir—Ch'am coming—Now in my mind, Zir, what do you think of a little zack; a little zack now, and zome o' your zugar in't, is main good.

Fri. Prithee, bring what thou lik'it best thyself; for I'm fure 'twill please no palate but thy own.

[*Exit Hob.*]

Ser. Sir, with humble submission, I don't yet discover any great hopes from this same project of your's. Pray, Sir, how do you propose to come at the lady?

Fri. While the garden door's shut, and that old dragon is so watchful of the fruit, there are but little hopes indeed. However, I won't quit the place; fortune may yet do something unexpectedly to befriend me.

Enter Hob, with pots, tobacco, bread, cheese, and sugar.

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming.—Here, Zir.—

Fri. Where's the sack, Hob?

Hob. Zack, Zir! Odd I can't knaw, I thought you zaid you had rather have ale.—Ale is indeed much wholesomer for your English stomachs.—For my part, I'd rather have ale now. Maister Richard, bite a bit avore you drink; come, and in the mean time I'll put a little zugar in the ale, and make it as good as I con for you. Come, Zir, against you're dispos'd.

Fri. Thank you, Hob—This fellow's kindness will poison me.

[*Aside.*]

Ser. Not at this rate of tasting, Sir; for he has not left a drop at the bottom.

Hob. Adod, 'tis main good, Zir.—Will you have t'other pot, Zir?

Fri. No; prithee drink this too, and then fetch us a couple.

Hob. Yes, Zir, I will.—Ch'am coming. [*Exit Hob.*]

Sir

F L O R A : o r ,

Sir Tho. Come, my merry countrymen, every man take
his lafs, and give us a dance or two, and then we'll have
the cudgels out.

Count. Yes, a'nt like your worship, we are all ready.
Come, Scratch, strike up. [Dance.]

Enter Hob.

Hob. Ay, marry Zir; well done, Ralph! zet to un,
Joan! zet to un———

Wife. [within.] Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming—Tol, lol—In,
Mary——Sides all now——Sides all———

Fri. Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming, Maister. Tol,
lol.

O. Hob. [within.] Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming—What a plague
ails vather, trow? An old vool! Udsblead, he makes
more a noise—Set to now, William—Ah, rarely done!
In, Mary; ah, dainty Mary! Turn her about, John—
now, now! a murrain!—You're quite out.—Look, Ralph
shoud ha' cast off; and while John had turn'd Mary
about, Tomas shou'd ha' led up Nan, and Joan met
Ralph at bottom agen; mean-while, John shou'd have
sided with Mary, and then Mary shou'd back to back
with Ralph, and then Tomas had come in again in his
own place; and so all had been right—Come, begin
again.—Strike up, Scratch. Tol, lol.

O. Hob. [within.] Hob! Hob! Where be ye?

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming: What a devil,
can't you be quiet a bit?—Tol, lol.

Enter Old Hob.

O. Hob. Heyday! heyday! This is rare sport. Uds-
blead, I'll strap you, you bafe rawg ye—Must you be
dauncing here, and your mother and I at work?

[Strikes him.]

Hob. Heyday, 'what's the matter now? What, must I
be beat all days o' my life?

O. Hob. You graceless rawg, mind your business then,
do; yonder's your poor mother within, a scawring and
scawring 'till she sweats again, and nobody to draw one
drop of beer.

Hob. I don't care a varthing—I won't draw a drop-
more.

more, if you go to that; do your worst, and take your course.

O. Hob. Sirrah, come in, and dan't stand dauncing here, dan't ye.

Hob. I won't go in, zo I won't; if that trouble ye, I will daunce, and daunce agen. Tol, lol, lol——

A I R XV.

O. Hob. Sure never was seen such a rebel,
Thou worst of undutiful boys;
Thy tongue, like the builders of Babel,
Confuses the ear with its noise.
Remember thy dreary figure,
When out of the well thou wast brought;
Thy mother and I toil'd with vigour
To save thee—And now thou'rt worth nought.

Ah! thou'rt an untoward boy as e'er was born. Marcy
forgive me for begetting thee. [*Exit O. Hob.*]

Hob. Marry come up, what's here to do, I trow?

Country-p. Here's the cudgels, an't like you; will your
worship please to have us begin?

Sir Tho. Ay, ay, by all means; make haste, Roger, and
bring forth the hat and favour.

Rog. Here 'tis, an't please you.

Sir Tho. Hang it up there; and he that wins it, let
him wear it—The first Somersetshire man that breaks a
head, here's half-a-crown for him to drink; and he that
breaks that rogue Hob's head, shall have another.

Hob. Shall he?

A I R XVI. *Go vind the vicar of Taunton Dean.*

Go vind the vicar of our town,

And he'll hauld ye an angel o' my head;

And I'll bet you another, and stake it down,

That I break both his and thy head——

Few bouts will set these matters right;

For my cudgel, an't prove a good one,

Shau'd make no distinction 'twixt yeoman and knight,

Sing heydon, dooden, cudden, &c.

Look ye, he that breaks my head shall ha' zomewhat to
do, I'll tell you that.—Let'n be who he wull, he shall
earn his money; ecod I'll rib'n; and look ye, to begin,
here I'll take up the cudgel—and now let the best
man here take up t'other a'n he dare——If he be a Zo-

mer-

merzeshire man, let'n be a Zomerzeshire man.——I fight for Gloucellershire, I don't care who knaws it.

Sir Tho. At him, at him there! What! is there nobody dare venture upon him? Neighbour Puzzlepate, take up t'other cudgel.

Puz. Not I, an't please you; I have enough of 'em already, he broke my head but last week.

Sir Tho. Roger—Sirrah, do you take up t'other cudgel, and thrash him, d'ye hear, thrash him soundly, sirrah.

Reg. I can't promise that, Sir; I'll do my best: I'll break his head if I can, in love; and if he breaks mine, much good may do him.

Fri. So, if Hob does but get the better of the combat, the testy knight will certainly be provok'd to come down, and then we shall have sport—Dick, help to encourage him.

Ser. Well said, Hob! O brave Hob! now for Gloucestershire, Hob!

Hob. I warrant ye, Maister; let me alone.

Fri. Here, Hob, there's an angel for thee; and if thou break'st his head, I'll give thee another.

Hob. Don't ye vear, Maister; ecod I'll 'noint 'em.

Reg. Do, if thou can'st——I don't fear thee, Hob.

Hob. 'Sblead, I'll drefs thy jacket, I'll dowse thy Zomerzeshire coat for thee.

Reg. Will you?

A I R XVII. *In Taunton Dean.*

In Taunton-Dean I was born and bred,
And 'tis knawn I don't value a broken head;
Nor shou'd I fear Hob, were he stout in his wrath,
As Hercules or Goulding of Bath.

Fal, lal, &c.

Come on.

Ser. O brave Hob!

All. O brave Roger!——Huzza!

[*Hob breaks his head, takes down the hat and favour, puts it on, and struts about.*]

Hob. Ecod I have don't, I have don't, efaith.

[A I R XVIII. *Now comes on the glorious year.*]

Now, brave boys, the fight is done,

And

And I the prize have fairly won;
For I knew I cou'd beat'n four to one,
And that he'll fore remember.

Fal, lal, &c.

Sir Tho. Foul, foul, foul.

Hob. Fair, fair, fair.

Sir Tho. You lie, you dog, 'twas foul.

All. Huzza.

Fri. Stand upon your guard, Hob, the knight's coming down.

Hob. Is he? Let'n come, and welcome; here I'll stand: I'll take no other than St George's guard. If he let's drive at me, vore gad, I'll hit'n o'er the sconce, an he were a knight of gold.

Sir Tho. Where are these bumkins? Now, who says 'tis fair? I say 'tis foul.

Hob. I say 'tis fair.

[*Sir Thomas endeavouring to come at Hob, is held by the country-people.*]

A I R XIX. *Come, sound up your trumpets.*
Pray let'n come, neighbours, for I ben't afraid;
Dost think I'll be scar'd, like a child at a rod?
I'll keep my ground bravely, and St George's guard.
Take care then, Zir Tomas, I'll 'noint'ye, ecod.

With a fal, lal, &c.

[*They let him go, Hob breaks his head; he draws his sword. Hob and Countrymen run away; Sir Thomas pursues.*]

Fri. to *Flo.* Now, now, dear creature, if ever you would redeem yourself or me from eternal bondage, be kind, and fly into the arms of liberty.

Flo. What wou'd you have me do?

A I R XX. *Come, open the door, sweet Betty.*

O fly from this place, dear Flora,

Thy jailor has left thee free;

And before the next blush of Aurora,

You'll find a guardian in me.

Flo. Fain would I exchange for the better;

Confinement can have no charms.

Fri. Think which of your prisons is sweeter:

This, or a young-lover's arms.

Madam,

Madam, your uncle has left the the garden-door open; there's no mortal now to oppose your flight——Scout,——Scout, you dog, and see that the enemy don't rally upon us.

Ser. Ay, ay, Sir.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Flo. Ah, but consider, if my uncle should surprise me!

Bet. Consider, the door's open, Madam.

Fri. Nothing but delay can ruin us.

Flo. O dear, I'm in a thousand frights!

Bet. This is downright provoking! Sir, since you see there's no hopes of my lady, if you can settle the least tip of your heart upon her humble servant, I'll be over the wall in a twinkling.

Flo. Hold, hold; rather than you should break your neck, I will venture——Well, here I am, I tremble every joint of me; now whither will you carry me?

[*They come down.*]

Fri. To a doctor that shall cure thee of all fears for ever——To the parson, the parson, my dear angel.

[*Exeunt.*]

Flo. O Lurd! but if he should not be at home now!

Bet. What should we do for something to be afraid of?

‘A I R XXI. *Ranting, roaring Billy.*

‘Thus maidens bely their desires,

‘Yet languish for what they refuse;

‘And tho’ their breasts glow with love’s fires,

‘Seem cold to the joys they would choose.

‘The tongue and the heart are two factions

‘We scarce reconcile till made brides;

‘Like statesmen, our speeches and actions

‘Have commonly contrary sides. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. There, you rustic rogues, you hard-headed dogs, I think I’ve at last met with your skulls——I believe I have notch’d some of your noddles for you.——Heyday! the garden-door open, and my niece gone!——My mind misgives me consumedly——Niece! Betty! Thieves! Robbery! Murder! Lost! Not to be found!

Enter

Enter Friendly's Servant.

Ser. So, here he is, and I must bam him till the business is over.

Sir Tho. Thieves! Thieves!

Ser. Pray, Sir, what's the matter?

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, let me go, or I'll run my sword through your guts.

Ser. Sir, I'm afraid your brain's something out of order; and therefore 'twill be a friendly part in me to take care of you.

Sir Tho. Blood and thunder! you dog, get out of my way, or I'll—

Ser. Nay, then— *[Presenting a pistol.]*

'A I R XXII. *Stand, who comes there?*

'Stand; have a care.

'Stand; have a care.

'One step to move,

'Will fatal prove;

'For I know who you are.'

me, Sir, make your thrust——

Sir Tho. What the devil are you, Sir?

Ser. A philosopher; and this small pop is my argument.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I believe you're a highwayman, and your pop there is your livelihood.

Ser. Sir, you may be as scurrilous as you please, provided you don't pass this way.

Sir Tho. 'Sdeath, Sir, what business have you to hinder me?

Ser. Sir, I have no business at present but to hinder you.

Sir Tho. But pray, Sir, how comes it to be your business?

Ser. Because, Sir, 'tis my business to do my master's business; and I have some modest reason to believe, that and the parson are now doing your niece's business.

Sir Tho. The devil! Murder! Where are they, villain?

Ser. Pray, Sir, compose yourself, for they are here.

Enter Friendly, Flora, and Betty.

Fri. Your blessing, Sir?

Ser. Does not that show a sweet temper in him now, to ask it of you, that are but his bare uncle?

Sir Tho. I am struck all of a heap, and dumb.

Ser. Come, Sir, don't be as obstinate as an old covetous father at the end of a comedy; consider, the main action's over, you had as good be reconcil'd.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I can't be reconcil'd.

[*Exit Sir Tho.*]

Ser. Go thy ways, like a cross-grain'd old fool.

Fri. Let him persist in his obstinacy, it can be no bar to our happiness. You look melancholy, my love.

Flo. 'I think I've reason—You promis'd to carry me to a doctor that should cure me of my fears. But, on the contrary, I find that the malady increases; and in nothing more than the dread of your inconstancy.' I have for ever lost my uncle's favour, and have now no friend but you—Shou'd you hereafter estrange your heart from me, I am wretched indeed—' Reflect on what I've said, excuse my suspicions, and remember there is no return of seasons in love.

A I R XXIII. 'Twas on a sunshine summer's day.

Flo. Sweet is the budding spring of love—

Next, blooming hopes all fears remove;

And when possess'd of beauty's charms,

Fruition, like the summer, warms.

But pleasures, oft repeated, cloy;

To autumn wanes the fleeting joy;

Declining till desires are lost—

Succeeded by eternal frost. Succeeded, &c.'

Fri. Banish those fears, and be assured they are groundless—Dick—

Ser. Sir.

Fri. Run, and call our country-neighbours back again to their diversions, in which they were interrupted by Sir Thomas; tell them they shall be merry with me to-day, to make them amends for being frightened. [*Exit Dick.*] 'Twas a happy interruption, for it gave us an opportunity to be for ever fix'd in love.—Look merry, my dear.

Flo. My concern vanishes, now I've disclosed my fears, and cheerfulness will soon resume its throne.

Fri.

Fri. You shall never have cause to mention those fears again—

Flo. It is easy to talk thus now; but the difficulty will be to speak these sentiments, with truth, a year hence. However, as I have run all hazards for you, honour will oblige you to conceal your inconstancy from me—shou'd you be guilty of it.

AIR XXIV. *Red House.* Duetto.

Flo. Let me not discover

In thee a faithless lover.

Fri. I'll never prove a rover;

But true as a turtle to thee, my dear.

Flo. Love prompts me to believe thee;

Do not then deceive me.

Fri. My conduct ne'er shall grieve thee,

Let this suffice; my heart's sincere.

Flo.—Let our lives be spent—

Fri.—In merriment;

Flo.—With the sweet cement—

Fri.—Of soft content.

Flo.—May our joys augment—

Fri.—May no dire event

Both.—Disturb our mutual pleasure.

Enter Dick, Hob, and Countryfolks.

Hob. Is Zir Tomas gone?

Fri. Ay, Hob; come in; what art afraid of?

Hob. 'Sblead, I was woundily afraid of 's zword; had I be kept to stick, I'd thrash 'en to mummy.

Fri. I'm sorry, neighbours, Sir Thomas's passionate folly disturb'd your sports one way; I'll endeavour to make you all satisfaction; this is my wedding-day, and consequently a day of jubilee.

Coun. We wish you joy, Maister Friendly and Mistress—

Hob. I wish ye joy too. But when I was zopp'd i' th' well, I little thought I should live to tell you zo.

Fri. Hob, thou shalt laugh at thy danger—now 'tis over.—Come, we'll 'ave a song and dance, and haste to my dwelling, and finish the day with mirth and hearty cheer: The night I'll dedicate to love and thee.

[To Flora.
A.R.

A I R XXV. *Friendly.*

Success this day has gain'd me possession
 Of what I love much dearer than life:
 The coming night shall give me fruition
 Of all I can wish in a lovely wife.
 To enjoy the sweets the country affords,
 Who would not forego the servile flatt'ry of courts;
 To hunt, fish, and fowl,
 And taste the full bowl,
 There is nothing so healthful as rural sports.

C H O R U S.

Now from envy free, —All friends loyally
 Supplicate with me, Our guardian divinity,
 To bless the king and queen, and royal progeny.
 Send us peace, trade's increase, health and prosperity.
 May Cupid's darts strike sure—But be the cause the cure;
 In virtuous deeds delight—Happy all unite
 In friendship and love.
 [*A dance, and exit.*]

T H E

T H E
SPIRIT OF CONTRADICTION,
IN TWO ACTS.

By a GENTLEMAN of CAMBRIDGE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Mr Partlet, a country-gentleman, father to Harriet,</i> <i>Louewell, an officer in the army, in love with Harriet,</i> <i>Steer, a gentleman grazier, in love with Harriet,</i> <i>Randal, Partlet's gardener,</i> <i>Ruis, a lawyer,</i>	<i>Covenant-Garden.</i> } Mr Ridout. } Mr Clarke. } Mr Gibbs. } Mr Shuter. } Mr Perry.
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W O M E N.

<i>Mrs Partlet, wife to Partlet,</i> <i>Miss Harriet,</i> <i>Betty, their servant,</i>	Mrs Ward. Miss Mowat. Mrs Green.
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SCENE, Partlet's Garden, at his country-house.

A C T I.

SCENE, Partlet's Garden.

Enter Randal, vex'd, a Spade in his hand.

RANDAL.

A PLAGUE, and a double plague, upon all perverse mistresses, say I! May the black blight take her! —By the lord Harry, a poor man had better live in hell than in service; there he is quit for one sort of vexation, here ch'ave a thousand.

Enter Partlet.

Part. Hey, hey! What, talking to thyself, Randal? Why, what art thou possess'd, man?

E. c. 3.

Randal.

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Rand. Truly ch'am, Meister; and with one of the most mischievous sort of spirits too.

Part. Which is that, pr'ythee?

Rand. Nay, a vemale one. By the welkin, a thousand moles do not make so much waste in a garden as one woman.

Part. Why, who is it that has been plaguing thee?

Rand. Who? she who plagues every body, and herself too. Can any body bear to have a tulip taken vor an onion!

Part. So my wife has been with you, I find. Good Randal, you must have patience with her.

Rand. Patience! Why, she order'd me yesterday to graft a peach upon a cabbage-stalk, and said 'twas the Italian method. Shortly she'll expect colly-vlowers vrom turnip-zeed, and parsly to produce strawberries. I marvel she does not order nectarines to be zown in hot-beds, that they may grow as big as melons.

Part. 'Tis her way; but you must bear with her humour.

Rand. Oons, Zir, who can bear with zuch contradictions?

Part. Contradiçtion is natural to her, Randal; she contradicts me, and all of us.

Rand. Marry, it may be natural to contradict you, because you are her husband; but zure, Zir, it cannot be natural to contradict nature.

Part. It was merely in contradiction to her friends, that, about twenty years ago, I got possession of her hand; and then, in contradiction to me, she the same night deny'd me that of her person.

Rand. Bless us! you did prevail though?

Part. Ay, by contradiction, or I must else have gone without her. I pretended, on a sudden, a most violent antipathy, and made a sham vow never to touch her while I breath'd; she understood this, and in pure spite came to bed to me.

Rand. Laud, what a spirit she has!——And yet, Meister, if you were to exert the husband a little——

Part. Why, Randal, I love my wife: her only satisfaction is to do every thing directly contrary to mine,
and

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and I indulge her in her humour for peace sake ; otherwise she is both prudent and virtuous.

Rand. In troth, Zir, you are safe enough, upon that score. She is too much a wasp vor the vles to follow her.

Part. Well, well, no more of this. I came hither, Randal, to consult thee upon a very weighty affair. I have of late approv'd thy judgment in several particulars, and intend to make thee my confident.

Rand. Why, Meister, all my knowledge does not consist in planting cabbages. Che had all my catechism by heart bevore che was sixteen. And but that my uncle the parson, one Lent, took zurfeit and dy'd, he had promis'd to make me a great scholard.

Part. Why, thou may'st be one yet. Thou wilt not be the first philosopher that has come out of a garden.

Rand. True, Meister ! but what is your weighty affair with me ?

Part. Why, it is concerning my daughter. I think she is now turn'd of eighteen.

Rand. Ay, and a zweet posey she is vor the best gentleman in the land to wear next his heart.

Part. The girl is passable enough. She is my only child, and I have a mind to see her well married.

Rand. It is an holy purpose ; and che dare zay, Miss Harriet will join in it.

Part. The poor thing is all obedience. The only difficulty will be in gaining my wife's consent.

Rand. You are right there, vaith, Meister : Vor if Madam take it in her head that you are for planting your daughter in the bed of matrimony, she will be for stocking her up, and letting her die in virginity.

Part. That's my fear. You have heard, perhaps, that I have had a proposal from two parties. The one is a gentleman of the army, every way worthy of her, I confess, but whose fortune is in expectancy ; the other is our neighbour Steer the grazier, not quite so young indeed, nor so well bred as the other, but exceeding wealthy.

Rand. In troth, Meister, my choice should go along with the acres : my young Mistress is not worth a vig vor a long march.

Part.

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Part. Why, that is my choice too. The first can settle no land but what lies in the field of honour; 'tis an estate of a precarious tenure.

Rand. Ay, believe me, a vield of clover is worth a hundred of it——But who is that turning out of the wilbert walk?

Part. Zooks, 'tis my wife!——I'll step into your harbour; and, d'you hear, Randal, make up your quarrel with her on any terms; for I have great need of thee at this time.

Randal. Ch'il do my best endeavour.

[Grates his spade, and sings.

A gard'ner is a noble trade;
No arms so ancient as the spade:
Tho' kings with titles make a stir,
Their grandfire was a gardener.

Enter Mrs Partlet.

Mrs Part. Cease this merriment, pray. Less noise and more work would speak you a better servant. Was not that my husband you were talking to just now?

Rand. Yes, Madam. Che was asking my Meister a few questions.

Mrs Part. Questions! What bus'ness have you to ask questions, or he to answer them? I thought I had told you it was from me only you were to take directions. But you are a very, a very hypocrite, Sirrah! What, you have been wheedling and colloquing with him, have you? You have taken him for your protector! But you shall find both your mistakes. Out of my doors you shall go, the moment your time's up.

Rand. I bezeech you, Madam.——

Mrs Part. Yes, yes, you lay your wife heads together to thwart and contradict me: You are his adviser, his counsellor, forsooth. He said the other day that his gardener had good notions. A fine age, truly, when such fellows as you shall pretend to have notions!

Rand. Che only beg, Madam.——

Mrs Part. Your begging will be in vain; for I am resolv'd you shall go. Nay, I know not what hinders me from turning you away this very instant.

Rand.

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Rand. Why, that's my request to you, Madam, if you wou'd but hear a body.

Mrs Part. And what is your request, I pray?

Rand. That you wou'd be pleased to discharge me this instant. My Lady Evergreen wants a gard'ner, and has sent this morning to hire me; and Meister has given his consent to let me go.

Mrs Part. Your Meister has given his consent to let you go? Fine doings, truly! And so I am to be left without a gardener! Was ever patience so abus'd! But you shall none of you have your wills. I say you shall not go this week: nay, perhaps you shall not go at all, since you are so hasty.

Rand. Madam, my Lady Evergreen will give me vorty shillings a-year more.

Mrs Part. Well, and are not my forty shillings a-year as good as my Lady Evergreen's?

Rand. Yes, Madam: but then your temper, an't please you——

Mrs Part. Bless me! I am a terrible bugbear! Every body harping upon my temper; when, I vow to heaven, there is not so mild or so reasonable a person in the whole country.

Rand. But what every body says, Madam——

Mrs Part. Every body is a liar, and none but fools believe every body. But no more; you shall stay at least till my daughter's marriage is over.

Rand. And is Miss Harriet to be married soon?

Mrs Part. What's that to you? May be, ay; may be, no; just as I shall think proper. Pray, what is your judgment upon the matter?

Rand. My judgment, you know, Madam, you never regarded. If che zet any thing in the zun, you always move it into the zhade.

Mrs Part. Come, come, your opinion and my husband's, I suppose, are the same. Which of the two parties has his voice?

Rand. Madam, there wants a new handle to the scythe.

Mrs Part. Answer me, I say, to my question.

Rand. Ods my life, how forgetful I am! you order'd the
the

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the upper ground to be sown with parsnips; ch'il go and prepare it this instant. *[Exit.]*

Mrs Part. This is a secret and a subtle knave! My husband has certainly made his choice, and, if possible, I must discover which way he is inclin'd. My daughter too, I suppose, has settled her foolish affection. But I'll baulk 'em both, or I'm not Mrs Partlet.

Enter Harriet and Betty.

Oh, are you come, daughter?—Walk off, minx. We don't want your company. *[Exit Betty.]*

Har. Pray, Madam, what is your pleasure with me this morning?

Mrs Part. When you have done your prating, daughter, I'll tell you.

Har. I wait your commands, Madam.

Mrs Part. Why, I must tell you then, that I am much deceiv'd in you: I took you to be of a meek, plain-meaning temper, like my own: but I find you to be a sly dissembling, hussy; your father's spirit exactly!

Har. Pray, Madam, let me know in what I have offended.

Mrs Part. Nay, 'tis my fault; I am only too good and too indulgent, that's all: But I'll put it to you for the last time. Be sincere with me, once in your life, and tell me, whether you have a mind to be married or not?

Har. I have already told you, Madam, that whilst my parents are living, I ought to have no will of my own.

Mrs Part. But you must own you have one, notwithstanding. Lookye, my dear, all that I seek is your satisfaction; therefore open your whole heart to me without reserve.——Do you think that matrimony can make a young woman happy?

Har. There are some women, Madam, who think it the happiest of states; as, indeed, there are others who find it the most miserable.

Mrs Part. Oh! then you utterly disclaim marriage?

Har. I don't say so neither, Madam.

Mrs Part. What do you say then? Pry'thee explain your--

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yourself. You must look upon it as a good or a bad thing; either to be coveted or avoided.

Har. Madam, I neither wish it nor fear it; 'tis a subject I have thought but very slightly on. The arguments for and against seem to be pretty near equal; so that I am as yet wholly indifferent.

Mrs Part. 'Tis that indifference distracts me, huffy. You have too much sense to continue in so foolish a state.

Har. I presume, Madam, it is the state a daughter ought to continue in, that she may submit the more cheerfully to a mother's determination.

Mrs Part. Suppose I was to determine you a husband?

Har. In such a case, the reasons for marriage would appear to me the strongest.

Mrs Part. Why so, pray?

Har. Because my duty to you wou'd oblige me to forget those which are against it.

Mrs Part. What if I were to determine you to remain single?

Har. Then, Madam, the reasons against marriage only shou'd be hearken'd to.

Mrs Part. What shifts and evasions are here! Bless me! I shall lose all my patience! Shall it be said then that I am unable to penetrate your true inclination?

Har. My inclination, Madam, is to be directed wholly by your's.

Mrs Part. Was there ever such obstinacy! perpetually contradicting me!

Har. Can a blind submission to your will be term'd contradiction?

Mrs Part. Yes, yes, it is, it is! For I wou'd have you have a will of your own, and you are pleas'd not to have one.

Har. But, Madam——

Mrs Part. Oh, I can bear it no longer! Hold your tongue, do.—Here again it will be said that I am in the wrong, I warrant. But 'tis your's that may be truly call'd a spirit of contradiction. I am not able to live under the same roof with you. Such a slut as you is a perfect

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fect pestilence in a family. I'll get rid of you, I am resolv'd. Yes, Miss, I'll marry you this very day. There are two offers made, and I'll accept of one of them. Don't think I intend to give you your choice, no; you shall take him whom I approve of. I'll just step in and talk with your father. If his notions are reasonable, and agree with mine, well; if not, I know my measures.

[Exit.

Har. Under what constraint am I forc'd to live! tho' naturally artless and sincere, yet am I oblig'd to counterfeit with all the world. My present situation requires it; for whom can I confide in? Ha, Lovewell return'd! Alas, he is one with whom, I confess, I have much ado to dissemble.

Enter Lovewell.

I imagin'd you were on your journey, Mr Lovewell.

Love. No, Madam, I am come to tell you, in short, that I am weary of being made a fool of, and that I am resolv'd not to see London till you have finally explain'd yourself to me.

Har. Good, angry Sir, what is it discomposes you?

Love. Your behaviour, Madam, has driven me beyond all patience. Have I not danc'd attendance after you near two years, when neither my love, prayers, or intreaties, have been able to draw from you one word upon which I might depend, either for happiness or misery? And when I spoke to you of the truest and most violent passion that ever touch'd the heart of man, you hear me with a calmness and insensibility which it is impossible to comprehend.

Har. And I would have it still impossible.

Love. Surely, Madam, you might discover either approbation or dislike; something from whence I might have known my fate.

Har. You ought to know that I am prudent, and nothing farther. The happiness of my life depends upon my being, at this time, impenetrable to your curiosity.

Love. Make but that appear, and I shall be satisfied.

Har. I thought you already knew, that, in consequence of a certain scheme I have form'd to secure my future

future welfare ; it is necessary that my mother, and even my father, shou'd be in the dark whether it is you whom I love or another : it is requisite, therefore, that you also be kept ignorant of my real affection.

Love. Wherefore must I ?

Har. Because if you were once acquainted with it, my father, mother, and every one who observ'd you, would soon be in the secret.

Love. Do you judge me so indiscreet, when all my happiness is depending ?

Har. No, but the natural violence of your temper would perform the part of indiscretion.

Love. [*composedly.*] Believe me, Madam, I know how to moderate that violence : and yet I protest to you, that one word of explanation, one single word from those dear lips, shall render me as calm and compos'd as yourself.

Har. Suppose that word was, That I resolv'd never to be your's.

Love. [*passionately.*] Death and confusion ! what do you mean, Madam ? By all that's sacred——

Har. I perceive, indeed, you are most wonderfully compos'd. Pray, would you be any more so were I to make a vow never to be another's ?

Love. O transporting thought ! My dearest Harriet, that would be kind indeed. The blest idea would banish all despair, and give new strength to my declining hopes ; my joy wou'd be so abundantly full——

Har. Yes, so full that it would run over to all you meet. Thus it is that your extravagant transports, either of joy or despair, would undoubtedly divulge what it is my business to conceal : For the moment my mother cou'd be sure whereon my happiness was plac'd, she would most certainly overturn it. Admit, therefore, for the present, I keep you wholly ignorant of my designs.

Love. No, ungrateful one, this is too much ; for I know, that I am not ignorant of your designs : I have had information, Madam, that you are this day to be married to Mr Steer.

Har. Perhaps it may be true, what then ?

Love. It was that brought me hither so suddenly.

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Har. And let something as suddenly take you back again.

Love. I now see through all your little artifices. You know I am somewhat in your mother's favour, and therefore held fair with me lest my resentment should make use of her to hinder your marriage.

'Har. Hinder it, Sir! Indeed I esteem you too galling a man to hinder a settlement so much to my advantage.

'Lov. [*languishingly.*] No, cruel one, you need not fear it. If you can be happier with another, I will add to your joys by bidding you eternally farewell.'

Har. Lookye, Mr Lovewell, you may traverse my intentions a little; but if it be true that you have no place in my heart, you will never gain one by chaggrining me. Do therefore as I advise, be seen to-day by neither my father or mother; I even order you not to appear here. If you have any regard for me, depart this instant.

Love. You know I must obey you; but if you deceive me, Harriet——

Har. As I promise nothing, there is no danger of your being deceiv'd.

Love. Unkind Harriet! Is it possible?

Har. Pray, no more. There's my father coming! Be gone this instant; fly, I say. [*Exit Lovewell.*]

Enter Partlet.

Part. Where are you, daughter? Come, and rejoice with me, my girl. I am not able to contain myself, I shall even burst with joy.

Har. May I know the occasion of it, Sir?

Part. The day is our own, I tell you, the day is our own! Your mother and I are agreed, my girl! and every thing is to be exactly as I wou'd have it.

Har. Pardon me, Sir, if I doubt that.

Part. 'Tis true, I say; she has been making the proposal to me herself, and I have feign'd not to approve of it in order to confirm her in her resolution.

Har. Nay, if the proposal comes from her, the execution will soon follow.

Part. Yes, child; the great riches of our neighbour Steer have taken with your mother as well as with me.
In

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In effect, a wealthy grazier is no such despicable offer. What if he does not bow quite so genteely as some of our foplings who frequent your balls and assemblies? he is wealthy, my girl, and I warrant will love thee.

Har. Two very engaging qualities indeed, Sir.

Part. His behaviour is, perhaps, a little more unpolish'd than one would wish it; but then there is no deceit in him.

Har. His sincerity, Sir, will make amends for that defect.

Part. He is thought, indeed, by some, to want sense.

Har. A very good circumstance, that, Sir!—For if he is without sense himself, he won't discover the want of it in me.

Part. Nay, mistake me not, he is no fool neither. He only wants to be broke of a custom he has got of talking too much in the phrase of his profession. Zooks, here he comes.

Enter Steer.

Steer. Good-morrow, good-morrow, neighbour; I cross'd the meadows this morning purely to take your judgment upon my new waistcoat here. I had it made on purpose to be marry'd in.

Part. Why, I think it a most magnificent one.

Steer. Ay, isn't it? I think to wear it on my wedding-day; and then lay it up, you must know, in case it should come into the King's head to prick me for sheriff.

Part. It is no bad contrivance.

Steer. Ay, ay, tho' I say it, let Bat. Steer alone for contrivance, ha, ha.—I can't help laughing to think what staring there will be in Smithfield to see me bedizen'd thus.

Part. You are well known there, 'tis like.

Steer. Known!—why, I have us'd the old ram—ay, let me see—'tis now upwards of twenty years since I first us'd the old ram—Known! why, man, Bartholomew Steer is as well known in Smithfield as Bartholomew's hospital.

Part. I believe, Sir, my daughter there has escap'd your notice.

Steer. No, no, I have cast a sheep's eye at her, and will be about her presently: she's a good-like lass, 'faith,

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—in right order, and fit to start for the wedding-plate. Come hither, my girl; how long will it be before you and I have a tumble together?

Har. A tumble, Sir! I don't understand you.

Part. Things are not ripe enough yet, neighbour.

Steer. Ripe! Ay, marry, but they be ripe as a cherry.

Part. Ay, but I mean matters are not agreed upon between us.

Steer. No? Well then let's agree them. And, do you hear, wife that is to be, in the mean time do you fit yourself with a ring—Take the biggest, the biggest, you fool, you.

Har. I presume, Sir, there are some previous ceremonies necessary to be settled first?

Steer. Previous! What's previous?

Part. Ay, ay, neighbour, we must deliberate a little.

Steer. Must we? come then, let's deliberate.

Har. Well then; and while you are deliberating, gentlemen, I believe it will be best for me to keep near my mother, lest she should come and interrupt you.

Part. Do so, girl; and if you meet Randal in your way, tell him I would speak with him.

Har. I shall, Sir——

[Exit.

Steer. Well, but now, neighbour, not to lose time, let us speak to the affair in hand. What fortune do you propose to give me, should I accept of your daughter?

Part. Lookye, Mr Steer, whatever sum I intend to give with her, I expect to have it doubled, and settled upon her children.

Steer. And these are the conditions?

Part. The very conditions.

Steer. Well then, to show you I hate haggling, give me your hand, and if I cross it, 'tis a bargain.

Part. There.

[Giving his hand.

Steer. There, 'tis a bargain. This is our method in Smithfield. I have bought a hundred head of cattle in as short a time.

Part. Good. And here comes Randal, most opportunely, to be a witness of it.

Enter Randal.

Well, Randal, have you consider'd of the affair I spoke to you of?

Rand.

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Rand. Yes, Zir. And I have a question or two to ask bevore I can give you my opinion.

Part. Ask 'em.

Rand. Does this gentleman love your daughter?

Steer. Hugely.

Rand. And does she like him?

Steer. Mightily, mightily.

Rand. And are you, Meister, willing?

Part. Yes.

Rand. And is Mistrefs willing too?

Part. Yes, both willing.

Rand. And I am willing.

Steer. Why then all difficulties are remov'd, and there's no more to be said.

Rand. Haud ye, haud ye, I say all difficulties are not remov'd, and there's a great deal more to be said.

Part. As how, pray?

Rand. Why, as zoon as Madam comes to understand that you are all of one opinion, she'll change her's to one directly contrary.

Part. I must needs own, that's her humour exactly.

Rand. For example—Have not you observ'd that the weather-cock upon the zummer-house always shifts away from the wind, so that to zet it zouth-west, it must absolutely blow vrom the north-east corner.

Part. Right.

Rand. Now I look upon Madam to be, in this respect, a sort of a weather-cock; and there's no vixing of her to one zide, but by blowing hard upon her vrom the other. That is to zay, that in order to carry your point, and make zure of Meister Steer vor a zon-in-law, you must still obstinately inzist upon giving your daughter to Mr Lovewell. And that's my counsel.

Part. And, if we succeed, Mr Counsellor shall have his fee.

Steer. Ay, ten guineas for Randal on the wedding-day.

Rand. Stay, there's another thing to be observ'd, or we shall never bring her to her vull pitch of contradiction.

Part. What's that?

Rand. Why, you'll find that Madam will be for signing the contract; 'tis best to give no time for reflection.

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The lawyer must be in the secret; the writings ready, only blanks left for the name; and while you press her hand for Mr Lovewell, she'll certainly, in pure contradiction, order the blanks to be filled up with Mr Steer's name, and sign the deed in a passion.

Part. Your advice is excellent, and shall be followed.—Let us separate, lest my wife should find us together.—I'll this instant to the lawyer, and order him to prepare the writings, to put our designs in execution. Bless me, what a strange state is a married one, when a man has no way of obtaining his desires in it: but by feigning to shun them!

Rand. True. *For.*

Husbands like watermen must look and row;
For crabbed wives, like crabs, do backward go.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II.

Enter Randal.

FLESH and blood is not able to bear this mistress of mine! For let me toil and labour ever so hard, she is sure to find fault. Here have I been digging, planting, and watering, till the sweat ran off my face, in hopes to please her, and all to no purpose; for whilst I was wiping myself dry, in came Madam, in one of her usual tantrums, and cry'd,—So, Randal, I am sure to see you stand idling, according to custom. Then, to prove to her how I had been striving to please her, show'd her what I had been doing; to which she reply'd, in her accustomed temper, This is what I wou'd not have had done. And when I inform'd her it was of her own ordering, she flew in a rage, and cry'd, Let me find you without an excuse, and hang you. So that the devil himself can do nought to please her. O' my conscience, when she's in those perverse humours, if a man were to tell her she was a virtuous woman, she wou'd spit in his face, and tell him he ly'd.—In this crisis, came my master to my relief, and calling Madam to him, said he had bus'ness with her; gave me the nod as to retire, in order, I suppose, to put our plan in execution, of fixing Mr Steer for his son-in-law: I took the hint, and left Madam possess'd with so fiery a composition, that if Meis-

ter

ster has but sufficient courage thoroughly to light her up, which he will certainly do by proposing Mr Lovewell for his son-in-law, I don't doubt but in pure contradiction we shall carry our point—Hark! They seem coming this way. I'll stand aside, and observe 'em.

[Retires..

Enter Mrs Partlet, follow'd by Partlet.

Mrs Part. No, husband, this exceeds all bounds! Perpetually thwarting and plaguing me! But, since it pleases you, pray go on. But surely 'tis the very height of obstinacy, to maintain that Mr Steer is not a proper match for my daughter.

Part. Nay, wife, I don't deny it: but as your daughter's welfare and happiness is depending, it can be no great crime in me to say that I would prefer Mr Lovewell before him.

Mrs Part. Lookye, don't let me hear a word more about him; Mr Lovewell had not best show his face in my house.

Part. Consider, wife, both his merit and family.

Mrs Part. What, wou'd you have my daughter follow the camp? I tell you, husband, I am resolv'd.

Part. Let me beseech you, my dear, to indulge me so far as to condescend to me but in this.

Mrs Part. Once more, I tell you, I am resolv'd; and as a proof, to-morrow morning I'll give my daughter to Mr Steer.

Part. But your reason, wife, for this haste?

Mrs Part. The reason, husband, is plain: And, to demonstrate to you that I have reason, I shall only tell you, that it is so because I will have it so. Mr Steer is, I believe, now in the house; and I'll this instant go and acquaint him with my resolutions: And do you hear, husband, I'd have you prepar'd to sign the articles within this half hour. [Exit.

Part. Well, Randal, what say you? Did I play my part with dexterity, or not?

Rand. Evaith, Zir, I believe this time you'll have your way; and perhaps 'tis the second in your whole life.

Part. Yes, I think we shall succeed now. Is the lawyer come?

Rand.

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Rand. I'll step and zee, and then come and join the cry vor Mr Lovewell. She's in right temper now; and if you don't strike, you deserve to lose the heat.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Harriet.

Part. So, daughter, we have done miracles, my girl!

Har. I overheard you; I was but in the arbour with Mr Ruin the lawyer, who is just now come, and waits to speak with you.

Part. Odsso! he is come very opportunely; I must go and settle matters with him before your mother sees him.

[*Exit.*]

Har. So, things are at last come to the crisis I expected, and it is high time to bring my poor stratagem into play; and if that fails, good b'ye happiness for ever! Oh, here comes Betty.

Enter Betty.

Well, Betty, have you got your lesson perfect?

Betty. Yes, Madam, and without much studying. I think you want me to lie and dissemble a little.

Har. And are you a proficient in those arts?

Betty. I were unworthy to serve a lady else.

Har. Well, Betty, I shall put myself entirely into your hands.

Betty. And, depend upon it, I'll put you into those of Mr Lovewell's.

Har. I hope you'll not deceive me.

Betty. If I do, Madam, may my lover deceive me on my wedding-night! and that's a most fearful wish, I can tell you, for a chambermaid's conscience.

Har. Take heed what you promise, for the proof is at hand. My mother is coming close here behind us to listen; we must feign not to see her. I shall but just give the alarm, and leave you, girl, to fight the battle.

Enter Mrs Partlet, listening.

Yes, Betty, my mother will, this time, be over-reach'd by us all; and I shall be the happiest young woman in England. Ha, ha! I must go and laugh a little with my father about it. Step you in and plaît my best head; and dy'e hear, be sure don't blab. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

Betty. Ha, ha! blab? I think not, truly. [*Turns short*]

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Short on Mrs Partlet] Laud, Madam, you so surpris'd a body!

Mrs Part. I am a strange hobgoblin, sure! If it were one of the fellows, you had not been surpris'd, I warrant—What were you tittering at, my daughter and you?

Betty. Bless me, Madam, we were not tittering.

Mrs Part. What a lie to my face? Yes, and I'll know the subject of your mirth before you and I part. Who is it that is to be over-reach'd, pray? What was my daughter saying to you before I came?

Betty. Saying, Madam—why, Miss was saying, she was saying as how—indeed, Madam, I can't tell what she was saying, not I—

Mrs Part. Tell me the truth, and I'll give you my green mantua, and forgive you the china jar you broke yesterday; but if you equivocate, I'll turn you out of the house this moment.

Betty. I should be loth to leave so good a lady's service.

Mrs Part. Speak then, and stay in it.

Betty. May I depend on't, Madam, that you won't name your author?

Mrs Part. I promise you I will not.

Betty. I am sure they wou'd poison me if they knew I betray'd 'em.

Mrs Part. Fear nothing, I tell you.

Betty. Are you certain [*looking about*] we cannot be overheard, Madam?

Mrs Part. 'Tis impossible. Come, I'm upon thorns till you begin—What, there is a conspiracy against me, I suppose.

Betty. A very dangerous one, Madam. You were to have been betray'd into a compliance with my master's will and pleasure.

Mrs Part. O, abominable!

Betty. Miss Harriet and he have join'd with Randal; to persuade you of their aversion to Mr Steer, on purpose to palm him upon you for a son-in-law by contradiction.

Mrs Part. Execrable, unheard-of wickedness! Mr Steer, then, is my husband's real choice?

Betty.

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Betty. Yes, Madam, my master has given him his solemn promise; and Miss Harriet says 'tis impossible she should be happy without him.

Mrs Part. They might well talk of over-reaching, truly! Oh, this was a most fortunate discovery! But I'll fit them for it.—Well, husband and daughter, I shall show you a trick that shall cure you of over-reaching. And so I was to have been their dupe, their fool, their instrument!

Betty. Yes, Madam; my master said, that this time you should submit to his decision.

Mrs Part. Submit! did he say submit? Monstrous, audacious, insupportable insolence! O detestable! Submit! the word chokes me, Betty; I am not able to get it down: get me the hartshorn! [*Exit Betty.*] I am besieg'd here in my own house! beset round, and every one I meet is an enemy! Ha, here comes my husband, my grand adversary of all. I'll compose myself as well as I can—Submit!

Enter Partlet and Randal.

Rand. [*aside to Partlet.*] Cheer up, Meister; do you stand to it that you'll have none of Mr Steer for your son-in-law, you shall find he'll be the only man impos'd upon you.

Part. Wife, I have been seeking you, to talk to you farther about our last discourse, our daughter's marriage; and as it is an affair of the utmost consequence to us all, wherein not only the happiness of our child, but our own, is concern'd, I think we ought not to be too rash in our choice.

Mrs Part. Good, wife husband, I shou'd be glad to know your sentiments upon the affair.

Part. My sentiments you have never regarded: at our last interview you absolutely resolv'd on Mr Steer for our son-in-law; and I am to tell you in plain terms, Madam, that neither I nor my daughter will have any thing to say to him.

Mrs Part. Pray speak mildly, my dear, I love peace and unity, and shall readily condescend to you, not only in this, but in every thing else that is reasonable.

Part. Look'yc, Madam, you may jest, with your condescensions, as much as you please; but I am in earnest

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nest when I tell you that Mr Steer is one I shall never approve of.

Mrs Part. Believe me, my dear, when I once more assure you that your choice shall determine mine; and as a proof, I tell you that Mr Steer is already out of my thoughts.

Rand. Resolutely persist in it, Meister—the alarm is not quite wound up yet; it will strike presently.

Part. Come, speak plain, Madam, and think me worthy of a serious answer: know, I am not always to be made a fool of.

Mrs Part. But why are you angry, my dear, since I give my word to do just as you desire? And, to show you my sincerity, as well as my submission, I'll go this instant and forbid Mr Steer from ever setting his feet within these doors again. [Exit.

Part. [after a pause.] Randal!

Rand. Zir!

Part. What say'st thou to this, man?

Rand. Nay, let the moon say, vor she knows best. There's enchantment in this, Meister.

Part. I am afraid it is too real. What the devil can make her so complying this morning?

Rand. I'll not believe but the vairies have been here.

Part. I am strangely unfortunate, that the only time in her life that she does not contradict me at all, should be to contradict me the most.

Rand. To comply zo with your will, I confess, Zir, is strangely unnatural.

Part. So unnatural, that I am all amazement—— but I'll follow her in, and, if possible, find out the bottom of it. [Exit.

Rand. Zo, there's an end of my plotting and politics!——I shall never have my advice ask'd again, that's certain. Not that I'll give it up neither; for there's so little dependence on Madam's word, that it goes and comes like the sun in April.

Enter Steer.

Steer. Well, old sopher; what, matters go on swimmingly, it seems! The articles are preparing within to be sign'd. I must look out the ten guineas——there's somfort for thee, old boy.

Rand.

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Rand. Madam is looking out to give you your discharge—there's comfort for you, old boy.

Steer. What! she is not so mad, sure, as to refuse me for her son-in-law?

Rand. I'm afraid 'tis too true; strange changes have happen'd within this half hour! But Meister is now with her.—I'll step in and listen a while, and endeavour to bring you a more perfect account. [Exit.

Steer. Do so—What, not have this little gipsy at last?—But if I can't have her, why I must look out elsewhere; hang it! I have a sort of kindness for the young hussy too.—But he that has coin needs not want kine, as the saying is—Oh here she comes.

Enter Harriet.

So, poor girl! What, things go ill on thy side, I hear. Thou art in danger of losing me, they say. Troth, I pity thee with all my heart.

Har. Something has fallen out a little unseasonably, Sir.

Steer. And thou art griev'd about it, my girl, ha? I am very glad on't with all my heart, 'tis a proof that thou lov'st me. But come, don't be cast down, don't despair; live in hopes; perhaps thou may'st have me yet.

Har. If it is your desire, there is no time to be lost; go this instant to my mother; press her, importune her, and peremptorily insist upon the performance of her promise—Hah, Lovewell! what brings him here?

Enter Lovewell.

Love. You'll excuse the abruptness of this visit, Madam, when I come to assure you that 'tis the last I shall ever make you.

Har. If you had spar'd yourself the trouble of this, I should easily have forgiven it.

Love. I know it, false one, for I am at last convinc'd; that which I have heard to-day; your discourse this morning; your affectation to send me away; the lawyer whom I have seen here; in short, all together confirm your treachery past doubt—But I intend to keep my temper—and tell you, you are unworthy every thing but contempt and silence.

Har. I wou'd willingly be inform'd, Sir, on what pretence

hence you dare insult me thus? or what hopes have I ever given you, that you shou'd presume to take this liberty?

Love. Had you discourag'd my addressees, I shou'd, tho' with pain, have desisted; but as you rejected them not, I fed my imagination with the vain hopes that my suit was agreeable. Credulous fool! thus to amuse myself, and suffer my passion to be so deluded, by the artful wiles of a deceitful woman.

Steer. Harkye, friend, dost thou call this wooing?

Love. Grant me patience, heav'n!

Har. Lookye, Sir, since you provoke me to speak, cou'd my father hesitate a moment between the large estate of Mr Snee and your slender fortune? And as for my part, I cannot but prefer the open easy temper of this gentleman, to that serious, passionate turn of mind you always appear in. His jests and good-humour are infinitely more engaging than your wild frantic sallies.

Steer. Ay, ay, I have always heard that women love mirth and good company; and tho' the lot has fallen upon me, lookye, friend, don't be cast down; such a pretty fellow as you need never despair.

Love. Lookye, Madam, order your fool there to be mannerly, or it may chance to cost him a beating.

Steer. A beating! I shou'd be glad to see that, faith; and if thou dost beat me, I'll forgive thee with all my heart; and for thy pains, if thou'lt call on me at Smithfield on a market-day, I'll give thee a beef-steak and a bottle into the bargain. [*Going up to him.*]

Love. Oons! you —

Har. [*interposing.*] Lookye, Mr Lovewell, either keep your temper, or leave the place; I have ever told you that I hate passionate people.

Steer. 'Egad, and so do I with all my heart; I'll e'en step in to your father. Pry'thee, my dear, get rid of this troublesome fellow as fast as you can, and then come to us; there's a good girl! [*Exit.*]

Love. Your proceedings, Madam, appear to me so extravagant, that I cou'd almost suspect you of feigning. Not that I wou'd flatter myself with such a vain thought. However, if the presence of Mr Steer might any way

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constrain you, he is now gone, and you may freely clear yourself.

Enter Mrs Partlet, privately.

Mrs Part. Ha, my daughter alone with Lovewell!

[Aside.

Love. Either justify yourself, or confess you have wrong'd me. Come, speak, Madam, as we are now alone.

Har. *[observing her mother.]* Ha! my mother! — Sir, there was no dissembling in the matter. I shall say the same thing now we are alone, which I said before Mr Steer. My father is desirous I shou'd accept him for a husband, and I declare it is the greatest satisfaction I can receive.

Love. This is beyond all patience to support: but I have done; I'll tell your mother, and let her know, tho' I have hitherto conceal'd my passion from her, how I have been treated by her ungrateful daughter. *[Going.*

Har. Yes, go to my mother, I advise you; and, d'y'e hear, tell her how much I hate and despise you.

Love. I thank you, Madam; and thus I bid an eternal adieu to the falsest of her sex.

Mrs Part. Hold, Mr Lovewell; I have partly heard how you have been treated, and think your wrongs invite compassion. I plainly perceive that my husband and daughter are combin'd to advise both you and me. I shall therefore make your case my own; for, tho' I say it, there is no one conforms to other peoples opinions more than myself.

Love. I am obliged to you, Madam; but after the base usage I have receiv'd from your daughter, my only care shall be now to forget her.

Mrs Part. I must confess that I had heretofore no intention of proposing my daughter, but to demonstrate to you, who are a reasonable person, that reason only is the guide of my actions, I frankly make you an offer of her; for, believe me, it will give me an infinite deal of pleasure to revenge me of my husband and daughter; for every body, you must know, conspires to thwart and contradict me; therefore let me intreat your acceptance —

Love. Indeed, Madam, you must excuse me; since your daughter denies me her heart, I must refuse her hand.

Mrs

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Mrs Part. What, do you contradict me too? Nay, Sir, I will make it so advantageous a match to you, that you shall be oblig'd to take her whether you will or no.

Har. I hope, Madam, you don't mean to engage me against my will?

Mrs Part. Your will, my dear? What, have you forgot already that you ought to have no will of your own?

Har. Alas, Madam, when I said it, there was but little sincerity in those words. Why wou'd you go to hinder my marriage with a man of Mr Steer's fortune?

Mrs Part. Huffy, Mr Lovewell has more fortune than you deserve.

Har. Let me live and die a maid, rather than bejoin'd to a man I have an aversion to.

Mrs Part. Hold your tongue; I'm resolv'd it shall be so.

Har. [*kneels and weeps.*] I conjure you, Madam, not to render my whole life unhappy.

Mrs Part. Rise, I say, for I am inflexible.

Har. For heaven's sake, Madam, have pity on me.

Mrs Part. Yes, you deserve it, truly. Know that I am acquainted with all your little subtilties. You wou'd have betray'd me, expos'd me to a compliance with your father's will and pleasure!—But to punish you, Miss, I'll make you *both* sign the articles that you had prepar'd together to deceive me; I'll go and order the blanks instantly to be fill'd up with the name of Lovewell.

[*Exit.*

Love. Stay, Madam—I wou'd not have your imagine: I shall ever sign them. No, I wou'd sooner perish than marry your daughter.

Har. I wou'd sooner perish than marry your daughter!—Bless me, Mr Lovewell, how emphatically you pronounc'd those words.

Love. I pronounc'd them as I meant 'em, Madam.

Har. And as, from my soul, I wish'd 'em; and, to deal sincerely with you, that you shou'd speak them in a manner to affect my mother, it was necessary they shou'd come from your heart. You had never deceiv'd her so well, if you had not been first deceiv'd yourself.

Love. Explain your meaning, pray.

G. g. 2.

Har.

Har. Why thus, then. To gain my mother's consent to my wishes, I have been oblig'd to lead my father also into an error. He, good man, has acted naturally in the affair; and when I found they were one and all for Mr Steer, I made use of Betty to acquaint my mother of it. The girl has acted her part to a miracle. And this is the reason, that, seeing every body against you, she has thought fit to take your part, that she may contradict every body; and she wou'd now constrain you to marry me in order to make you contradict yourself.

Love. Dearest Harriet, 'you have put music into my heart that will make it dance for my whole life. Just now I was quite benighted in despair; but you have, 'in three words,' so dazzled me with happiness, that I want faculties to perceive it.

Har. I wou'd not have you perceive it till the articles are sign'd. I shall dread some indiscreet transport, that may perhaps spoil all. No, Mr Lovewell, I wou'd not have you yet convinc'd that you are dear to me.

Love. [*transported.*] Enchanting sounds! O how shall I be worthy of such goodness! My kindest, dearest, adorable mistress!

Har. Hush, I hear steps this way. We must by all means continue to dissemble.

Enter Randal.

No, Mr Lovewell, don't imagine you shall ever marry me against my will.

Rand. I believe not, vaith, vor it would be with all your heart and with all your zoul. I have long suspected it, and am now convinc'd that all your quarrels were feign'd, pretended, mere sham ones, design'd purely to cheat my mistress; but that she might not be so impos'd on, I have been just letting her into the secret.

Har. Oh, Mr Lovewell, we are ruin'd then for ever!

Love. Wretch, what hast thou done?

Rand. I can't help it now, vor Madam is coming to undo all her doings again; and the reason why I inform'd her, was because Mr Steer had promis'd me ten guineas on his wedding-day.

Love. Rascal, why did you not ask me fifty?

Rand. Nay, nay, it won't signify now, since Madam knows

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Knows all—Nevertheless, if I were to see that same wifty you mention——

Har. What then?

Rand. Why then, perhaps things may not go so bad as you imagine.

Love. Here, take my purse.—And now, good Randall——

Rand. And now, Zir, to speak truth, and shame the Devil, Madam knows nought about it——But that you may not think your money ill bestow'd, I will say something for you to Madam that shall deserve it; and, luckily, yonder she's coming.

Enter Mrs Partlet, Betty following.

I'm glad you are come to make peace, Madam; I vound the young volk here just going to vighting. They did so wrangle and jangle together, that, vor my part, I thought they had been married already,

Mrs Part. What, daughter, do you continue obstinate? Lookye, huffy, you had best conform to your duty, or I shall send you to your aunt in Cumberland to watch geese upon a common,

Enter Mr Steer.

I thought, Sir, I had given you your discharge, and forbid you ever coming within these doors; after which, let me tell you, I look upon it to be a piece of insolence to appear here again; therefore, Sir, pray walk out.

Steer. Wounds, woman, I only came to give my sweetheart a buss at parting; I hope there's no great harm in that.

Enter Lawyer.

Mrs Part. So, Mr Ruin, I am glad you are come; is every thing done exactly as I directed?

Ruin. Yes, Madam, all is ready for executing.

Mrs Part. Tell John to bring a table, and bid my husband attend this moment. [To Betty.

Bet. Yes, Madam.—My master is here: [Exit.

Enter Partlet.

A table brought on, Betty returns.

Part. Wife, give me leave, for the last time, to re-monstrate to you ——

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Mrs Part. Husband, show no airs here——Remonstrate! Pray, Sir, who made you a remonstrator?

Ruin. Madam, may I be so bold as to speak one word, while I may do it in time? The young lady's concern affects me. I have always observ'd that these forc'd marriages——

Mrs Part. What, Mr Ruin, are you too against poor Mr Lovewell and me? There wanted only you to make the opposition complete. Come, give me the pen. [*She signs.*] Here Harriet, do you sign under me. Don't be refractory.

Har. I must sign, since you command me. [*Signs.*] There, Madam——but my comfort is, you can't make my father sign.

Mrs Part. That, child, we shall try. Come, husband, you who can advise and remonstrate, write your name here——quickly, you had best.

Part. I'll sign for quietness sake, since it can signify nothing [*signs*]; for I am sure you can't force Mr Lovewell.

Mrs Part. Sir, to oblige you also to join your hand, I have ordered a clause here, to confirm to you, over and above the sum propos'd, a gift of a thousand pound at the birth of the first child.

Love. 'Tis not those gifts that I covet; but since it will oblige you, Madam, I'll sign. [*Signs.*]——Here, Mr Ruin, take the articles, and depart quickly, lest my mother-in-law shou'd recant.

Ruin. The deed is irrevocable. [*Exit.*]

Love. Now, my dearest, you are my own; and thus I take possession.

Har. O dear Mr Lovewell, kiss me as much as you please, but pray, don't eat me.

Mrs Part. [*amaz'd*] I am all amazement! What means all this transport? Does she then really love him at last?

Rand. I told you Miss Harriet lik'd something polite; but you'll ne'er believe one.

Betty. The green mantua, Madam, I beg leave to remind you of.

Part. This sudden unexpected change, I must confess, surprises me. My chief aim was to see my daughter

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ter well provided for: and since I find my child is pleas'd, I'll e'en be pleas'd too.

Mrs Part. Pleas'd! O heavens, have I been such a tame, harmless turtle, as to please a husband at last! I am betray'd, robb'd, cheated, and abus'd.—But—

Love. [*kneeling with Har.*] Madam, thus low we implore your pardon for this innocent deceit; and let love excuse what faults have been committed.

Mrs Part. [*turning away.*] I will never forgive you; never, never, never.

Part. Why, you sign'd voluntarily, wife; you was not compell'd, as we were.

Mrs Part. No matter, I'll this instant to London, for advice.—I'll be divorc'd from my husband; I'll never see the face of my daughter more; my servants shall be sent to Bridewell; and the lawyer shall be put in the pillory. You have made me mad amongst you, and you shall feel the effects on't.

Steer. Ay, goody, but curst cows have short horns.

Mrs Part. Out, bullock. [*Gives him a box o' th' ear.*]

[*Exit.*]

Love. I am concern'd to see my mother so violent.

Steer. By George, I am concern'd to feel her so.

Har. Be it my care to appease her: be it your's, Mr Lovewell, to reward this girl, to whose services we, in great part, owe our present happiness.

Love. As Betty has made me happy in a wife, the way to be even with her, is to make her a fortune for some honest man that may be worthy of her.

Steer. That care shall be mine, if Betty pleases. I came hither for a wife, and it shall never be said that Bat Steer went to market and could not deal. What say you to the bargain, girl? Wilt thou strike me, or not?

Bet. The honour, Sir, is too great to be refus'd.

Steer. Why then, touch here, wench; and when the parson has conjur'd over us a little, thou shalt find that I know how to tumble a bed, as well as thou to make one. Give me but fair play, and if thou dost not own thou hast met with a man to thy mind, I'll give thee leave to plant me a pair of horns that shall reach from Hicks's Hall to Pye-Corner.

Part.

356 THE SPIRIT OF CONTRADICTION.

Part. I dare warrant Betty proves a good wife ; and since you have thought fit to match into the family, neighbour Steer, I insist that the two weddings be kept together. Here is Randal can scrape a little ; and egad we'll have a jubilee.

Steer. Odsflesh, neighbour Partlet, you are a hearty cock, and I accept your offer. And that your concert may be complete, I'll summon down the whole band of White-Chappel cleavers. A nod of mine will fetch 'em.

Love. When contradiction fain would bear the sway,
'Tis just and right to baffle all its play ;
That social peace in every house may reign,
And love and merit due reward obtain.

E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Mrs WARD,

Who plays the Character of *Mrs Partlet*.

BE witness all, how cruelly I'm us'd ;
How patience in poor women is abus'd !
Not husband, daughter, friend, or servant true :
My last hope, gentlemen, remains in you ;
Surely you will not contradict me too. }
Ladies, I know you'll take the injur'd part ;
Distress will always reach the tender heart.
Nay, some will surely make the cause their own ;
There are, I trust, more Partlets here than one.
In two short words all wifehood's understood ;
In those that do controul,—and those that wou'd.
Well fare the first ;—and let—the humble fool
Despise her vows, and come to me to school.
The wives are with me ; and what maid, I wonder,
But hopes, one of these days, to keep a husband under ?
You husbands that are tittering yonder, mum ;
You think me copy'd from your piece at home.
Each good-man finds the character so pat,
There's no persuading but his Juno sat.
Some saucy cit, or, possibly, some peer,
May, by-and-by, at supper, say—My dear, }
Have we, of late, had any poet here ?

Not

E P I L O G U E.

Not so those gallery friends I yonder spy
Sitting demurely with their Partlets by;
They at the comic scene wou'd bust with laughter,
Did they not fear, poor souls, that tragedy'd come after.
Peace, peace, your silence we accept as praise;
A sleeping hornet who wou'd wish to raise?
Pity your ears shou'd suffer for your zeal;
Smile you, who dare not clap,——'twill do as well.
Grant all one boon, and spare the bard's affliction,
Let me alone possess the Spirit of Contradiction.

THE

THE PATRON.

IN THREE ACTS.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Sir Thomas Lofty,</i>	}		<i>Hay-Market.</i>
<i>Sir Peter Pepperpot,</i>			Mr Foote.
<i>Dick Bever,</i>	-	-	Mr Death.
<i>Frank Younger,</i>	-	-	Mr Davis.
<i>Sir Roger Dowlas,</i>	-	-	Mr Palmer.
<i>Mr Rust,</i>	-	-	Mr Weston.
<i>Mr DaByl,</i>	-	-	Mr Granger.
<i>Mr Puff,</i>	-	-	Mr Hayes.
<i>Mr Staytape,</i>	-	-	Mr Brown.
<i>Robin,</i>	-	-	Mr Parsons.
<i>John,</i>	-	-	Mr Lewis.
<i>Two Blacks,</i>	-	-	

W O M A N.

<i>Miss Juliet,</i>	-	-	Mrs Granger.
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A C T I.

SCENE, *The Street.*

Enter BEVER and YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.

NO, Dick, you must pardon me.
Bev. Nay, but to satisfy your curiosity.
Youn. I tell you, I have not a jot.
Bev. Why then to gratify me.
Youn. At rather too great an expence.

Bev.

Dev. To a fellow of your observation and turn, I should think, now, such a scene a most delicate treat.

Youn. Delicate! Palling, nauseous, to a dreadful degree. To a lover, indeed, the charms of the niece may palliate the uncle's fulsome formality.

Dev. The uncle! ay; but then you know he is only one of the group.

Youn. That's true; but the figures are all finish'd alike. *A maniere*, a tiresome sameness, throughout.

Dev. There you will excuse me; I am sure there is no want of variety.

Youn. No! then let us have a detail. Come, Dick, give us a bill of the play.

Dev. First, you know, there's Juliet's uncle.

Youn. What, Sir Thomas Lofty! the modern Midas, or rather (as fifty dedications will tell you), the Pollio; the Atticus, the patron of genius, the protector of arts, the paragon of poets, decider of merit, chief justice of taste, and sworn appraiser to Apollo and the tuneful nine. Ha, ha! Oh, the tedious, insipid, insufferable coxcomb!

Dev. Nay, now, Frank, you are too extravagant. He is universally allow'd to have taste; sharp-judging Adriel, the muse's friend, himself a muse.

Youn. Taste! by whom? underling bards that he feeds, and broken booksellers that he bribes. Look ye, Dick; what raptures you please when Miss Lofty is your theme, but expect no quarter for the rest of the family. I tell thee once for all, Lofty is a rank impostor, the buffo of an illiberal mercenary tribe; he has neither genius to create, judgment to distinguish, nor generosity to reward; his wealth has gain'd him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty insolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. *Voilà le portrait de votre oncle!* Now on to the next.

Dev. The ingenious and erudite Mr Rust.

Youn. What, old Martin the medal-monger?

Dev. The same, and my rival in Juliet.

Youn. Rival! what, Rust? why, she's too modern for him by a couple of centuries. Martin! why he likes no heads but upon coins. Marry'd! the mummy! Why 'tis not above a fortnight ago, that I saw him making love to
the

the figure without a nose in Somerset-gardens: I caught him stroaking the marble plaits of her gown, and asked him if he was not ashamed to take such liberties with ladies in public.

Bev. What an inconstant old scoundrel it is!

Youn. Oh, a Dorimont. But how came this about? what could occasion the change? was it in the power of flesh and blood to seduce this adorer of virtù from his marble and porphyry?

Bev. Juliet has done it; and, what will surprise you, his taste was a bawd to the business.

Youn. Prythee explain.

Bev. Juliet met him last week at her uncle's: he was a little pleased with the Greek of her profile; but, on a closer inquiry, he found the turn-up of her nose too exactly resemble the bust of the princess Popæa.

Youn. The chaste moiety of the amiable Nero?

Bev. The same.

Youn. Oh, the deuce! then your business was done in an instant.

Bev. Immediately. In favour of the tip, he offered *chart blanche* for the rest of the figure; which (as you may suppose) was instantly caught at.

Youn. Doubtless. But who have we here?

Bev. This is one of Lofty's companions, a West Indian of an overgrown fortune. He saves me the trouble of a portrait. This is Sir Peter Pepperpot.

Enter Sir Peter Pepperpot, and two Blacks.

Sir Pet. Careless scoundrels! harkee, rascals! I'll banish you home, you dogs! you shall back, and broil in the sun. Mr Bever, your humble; Sir, I am your entirely devoted.

Bev. You seem mov'd; what has been the matter, Sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Matter! why, I am invited to dinner on a barbicu, and the villains have forgot my bottle of chian.

Youn. Unpardonable.

Sir Pet. Ay, this country has spoil'd them; this same christening will ruin the colonies.—Well, dear Bever, rare news, boy; our fleet is arriv'd from the West.

Bev. It is?

Sir Pet. Ay, lad, and a glorious cargo of turtle. It was

as lucky I went to Brighthelmstone; I nick'd the time
 a hair; thin as a lath, and a stomach as sharp as a
 mark's: never was in finer condition for feeding.

Bev. Have you a large importation, Sir Peter?

Sir Pet. Nine; but seven in excellent order: the Cap-
 tain assures me they greatly gain'd ground on the voyage.

Bev. How do you dispose of them?

Sir Pet. Four to Cornhill, three to Almack's, and
 he two sickly ones I shall send to my borough in York-
 hire.

Youn. Ay! what, have the Provincials a relish for
 turtle?

Sir Pet. Sir, it is amazing how this country improves
 in turtle and turnpikes; to which (give me leave to say)
 we, from our part of the world, have not a little contri-
 buted. Why formerly, Sir, a brace of bucks on the
 Mayor's annual day was thought a pretty moderate blef-
 sing. But we, Sir, have polish'd their palates: Why,
 Sir, not the meanest member of my corporation but can
 distinguish the path from the pee.

Youn. Indeed!

Sir Pet. Ay, and sever the green from the shell with
 the skill of the ablest anatomist.

Youn. And are they fond of it?

Sir Pet. Oh, that the consumption will tell you. The
 stated allowance is six pounds to an alderman, and five
 to each of their wives.

Bev. A plentiful provision.

Sir Pet. But there was never known any waste. The
 mayor, recorder, and rector, are permitted to eat as much
 as they please.

Youn. The entertainment is pretty expensive.

Sir Pet. Land-carriage, and all. But I contriv'd to
 smuggle the last that I sent them.

Bev. Smuggle! I don't understand you.

Sir Pet. Why, Sir, the rascally coachman had always
 charged me five pounds for the carriage. Damn'd dear!
 Now my cook going at the same time into the country,
 I made him clap a capuchin upon the turtle, and for
 thirty shillings put him an inside passenger in the Don-
 caster fly.

Youn. A happy expedient.

VOL. IV.

H h

Bev.

Bev. Oh, Sir Peter has infinite humour.

Sir Pet. Yes; but the frolic had like to have prov'd fatal.

Youn. How so?

Sir Pet. The maid at the Rummer, at Hatfield, popp'd her head into the coach, to know if the company would have any breakfast: ecod, the turtle, Sir, laid hold of her nose, and flapp'd her face with his fins, till the poor devil fell into a fit. Ha, ha, ha!

Youn. Oh, an absolute Rabelais.

Bev. What, I reckon, Sir Peter, you are going to the squire?

Sir Pet. Yes; I extremely admire Sir Thomas: you know this is his day of assembly; I suppose you will be there: I can tell you, you are a wonderful favourite.

Bev. Am I?

Sir Pet. He says your natural genius is fine; and, when polish'd by his cultivation, will surprize and astonish the world.

Bev. I hope, Sir, I shall have your voice with the public.

Sir Pet. Mine! O fie, Mr Bever.

Bev. Come, come, you are no inconsiderable patron.

Sir Pet. He, he, he! Can't say but I love to encourage the arts.

Bev. And have contributed largely yourself.

Youn. What, is Sir Peter an author?

Sir Pet. O fie! what, me? a mere dabbler; have blotted my fingers, 'tis true. Some sonnets, that have not been thought wanting in salt.

Bev. And your epigrams.

Sir Pet. Not entirely without point.

Bev. But come, Sir Peter, the love of the arts is not the sole cause of your visits to the house you are going to.

Sir Pet. I don't understand you.

Bev. Miss Juliet, the niece.

Sir Pet. O fie! what chance have I there? Indeed if Lady Pepperpot should happen to pop off—

Bev. I don't know that. You are, Sir Peter, a dangerous man; and were I a father or uncle, I should not be a little shy of your visits.

Sir

Sir Pet. Psha! dear Bever, you banter.

Bev. And (unless I am extremely out in my guesses), that lady—

Sir Pet. Hey! what, what, dear Bever?

Bev. But if you should betray me—

Sir Pet. May I never eat a bit of green fat, if I do.

Bev. Hints have been dropp'd.

Sir Pet. The devil! Come a little this way.

Bev. Well-made: not robust and gigantic, 'tis true; but extremely genteel.

Sir Pet. Indeed!

Bev. Features, not entirely regular; but marking, with an air now, superior; greatly above the—you understand me?

Sir Pet. Perfectly. Something noble; expressive of—fashion.

Bev. Right.

Sir Pet. Yes, I have been frequently told so.

Bev. Not an absolute wit; but something infinitely better: an *enjouement*, a spirit, a —

Sir Pet. Gaiety. I was ever so from a child.

Bev. In short, your dress, address, with a thousand other particulars that at present I can't recollect.

Sir Pet. Why, dear Bever, to tell thee the truth, I have always admir'd Miss Juliet, and a delicate creature she is: sweet as a sugarcane, straight as a bamboo, and her teeth as white as a negro's.

Bev. Poetic, but true. Now only conceive, Sir Peter, such a plantation of perfections to be devoured by that caterpillar, Rust.

Sir Pet. A liquorish grub! Are pine-apples for such muckworms as he? I'll send him a jar of citrons and ginger, and poison the pipkin.

Bev. No, no.

Sir Pet. Or invite him to dinner, and mix rat's-bane along with his curry.

Bev. Not so precipitate; I think we may defeat him without any danger.

Sir Pet. How, how?

Bev. I have a thought—but we must settle the plan with the lady. Could not you give her the hint that I should be glad to see her a moment.

Sir Pet. I'll do it directly.

Bev. But don't let Sir Thomas perceive you.

Sir Pet. Never fear. You'll follow?

Bev. The instant I have settled matters with her; but fix the old fellow so that she may not be mis'd.

Sir Pet. I'll nail him, I warrant; I have his opinion to beg on this manuscript.

Bev. Your own?

Sir Pet. No.

Bev. Oh ho! what, something new from the Doctor, your chaplain?

Sir Pet. He! no, no. O Lord, he's elop'd.

Bev. How!

Sir Pet. Gone. You know he was to dedicate his volume of fables to me: so I gave him thirty pounds to get my arms engrav'd, to prefix (by way of print) to the frontispiece; and, O grief of griefs! the Doctor has mov'd off with the money. I'll send you Miss Juliet.

[Exit.

Bev. There, now, is a special protector! the arts, I think, can't but flourish under such a Mæcenæus.

Toun. Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool.

Bev. True; but then, to justify the dispensation,
From hence the poor are cloath'd, the hungry fed;
Fortunes to bookfellers, to authors bread.

Toun. The distribution is, I own, a little unequal:
And here comes a melancholy instance; poor Dick Dactyl,
and his publisher Puff.

Enter Dactyl and Puff.

Puff. Why, then, Mr Dactyl, carry them to somebody else; there are people enough in the trade. But I wonder you would meddle with poetry; you know it rarely pays for the paper.

Dac. And how can one help it, Mr Puff? genius impels; and when a man is once listed in the service of the muses—

Puff. Why, let him give them warning as soon as he can. A pretty sort of service indeed, where there are neither wages nor vails! The muses! And what, I suppose this is the livery they give? Gadzooks, I had rather be a waiter at Ranelagh.

Bev.

Bev. The poet and publisher at variance! What is the matter, Mr Daetyl?

Dac. As Gad shall judge me, Mr Bever, as pretty a poem; and so polite; not a mortal can take any offence; all full of panegyric and praise.

Puff. A fine character he gives of his works. No offence! the greatest in the world, Mr Daetyl. Panegyric and praise! and what will that do with the public? why; who the devil will give money to be told, that Mr Such-a-one is a wiser or better man than himself? No, no; 'tis quite and clean out of nature. A good sousing satire now, well powdered with personal pepper, and seasoned with the spirit of party; that demolishes a conspicuous character, and sinks him below our own level; there, there, we are pleased; there we chuckle and grin, and toss the half-crowns on the counter.

Dac. Yes, and so get cropp'd for a libel.

Puff. Cropp'd! ay; and the luckiest thing that can happen to you. Why, I would not give two-pence for an author that is afraid of his ears. Writing, writing is, (as I may say), Mr Daetyl, a sort of warfare; where none can be victor that is the least afraid of a scar. Why, zooks, Sir, I never got salt to my porridge till I mounted at the royal exchange.

Bev. Indeed!

Puff. No, no; that was the making of me. Then my name made a noise in the world. Talk of forked hills, and of Helicon! romantic and fabulous stuff. The true Castalian stream is a shower of eggs, and a pillory the poet's Parnassus.

Dac. Ay, to you, indeed, it may answer; but what do we get for our pains?

Puff. Why, what the deuce would you get? food, fire, and fame. Why, you would not grow fat! a corpulent poet is a monster, a prodigy! No, no; spare diet is a spur to the fancy; high-feeding would but founder your Pegafus.

Dac. Why, you impudent, illiterate rascal! who is it you dare treat in this manner?

Puff. Heyday! what is the matter now?

Dac. And is this the return for all the obligations

you owe me? But no matter; the world, the world shall know what you are, and how you have us'd me.

Puff. Do your worst; I despise you.

Dac. They shall be told from what a dunghill you sprang. Gentlemen, if there be faith in a sinner, that fellow owes every shilling to me.

Puff. To thee!

Dac. Ay, firrah, to me. In what kind of way did I find you; then where and what was your state? Gentlemen, his shop was a shed in Moorfields; his kitchen, a broken pipkin of charcoal; and his bed-chamber, under the counter.

Puff. I never was fond of expence; I ever minded my trade.

Dac. Your trade! and pray with what stock did you trade? I can give you the catalogue; I believe it won't overburden my memory. Two odd volumes of Swift; the *Life of Moll Flanders*, with cuts; the *Five Senses*, printed and coloured by Overton; a few classics, thumb'd and blotted by the boys of the Charter-house; with the trial of Dr Sacheverel.

Puff. Malice.

Dac. Then, firrah, I gave you my Canning; it was the first set you afloat.

Puff. A grub.

Dac. And it is not only my writings: you know, firrah, what you owe to my physic.

Bev. How! a physician?

Dac. Yes, Mr Bever; physic and poetry. Apollo is the patron of both: *Opiferaque per orbem dicor.*

Puff. His physic!

Dac. My physic! ay, my physic. Why, dare you deny it, you rascal! What, have you forgot my powders for flatulent crudities?

Puff. No.

Dac. My cosmetic lozenge and sugar-plumbs?

Puff. No.

Dac. My coral for cutting of teeth, my potions, my lotions, my pregnancy-drops, with my paste for superfluous hairs?

Puff. No, no; have you done?

Dac.

Dac. No, no, no; but I believe this will suffice for the present.

Puff. Now, would not any mortal believe that I ow'd my all to this fellow?

Bev. Why, indeed, Mr Puff, the balance does seem in his favour.

Puff. In his favour! why you don't give any credit to him? a reptile, a bug, that owes his very being to me.

Dac. I, I, I!

Puff. You, you! What, I suppose you forget your garret in Wine-office-court, when you furnish'd paragraphs for the Farthing-post at twelvepence a dozen.

Dac. Fiction.

Puff. Then did not I get you made collector of casualties to the Whitehall and St James's? but that post your laziness lost you. Gentlemen, he never brought them a robbery till the highwayman was going to be hang'd; a birth, till the christening was over; nor a death, till the hatchment was up.

Dac. Mighty well!

Puff. And now, because the fellow has got a little in flesh, by being puff to the play-house this winter, (to which, by the bye, I got him appointed), he is as proud and as vain as Voltaire. But I shall soon have him under; the vacation will come.

Dac. Let it.

Puff. Then I shall have him sneaking and cringing, hanging about me, and begging a bit of translation.

Dac. I beg, I, for translation!

Puff. No, no, not a line; not if you would do it for two-pence a-sheet. No boil'd beef and carrot at mornings; no more cold pudding and porter. You may take your leave of my shop.

Dac. Your shop! then at parting I will leave you a legacy.

Bev. O fie, Mr Dactyl!

Puff. Let him alone.

Dac. Pray, gentlemen, let me do myself justice.

Bev. Younger, restrain the Publisher's fire.

Youn. Fie, gentlemen, such an illiberal combat: it is a scandal to the republic of letters.

Bev.

Bev. Mr Daftyl, an old man, a mechanic, beneath—

Dac. Sir, I am calm; that thought has restor'd me.
To your insignificancy you are indebted for safety. But
what my generosity has saved, my pen shall destroy.

Puff. Then you must get somebody to mend it.

Dac. Adieu!

Puff. Farewell! [*Exeunt severally.*]

Bev. Ha, ha, ha! come, let us along to the squire.

Blockheads with reason wicked wits abhor;

But dunce with dunce is barb'rous civil war.

A C T II.

Enter BEVER and YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.

POOOR Daftyl! and dwells such mighty rage in little
men? I hope there is no danger of bloodshed.

Bev. Oh, not in the least: the *gens vatum*, the nation
of poets, though an irritable, are yet a placable people.
Their mutual interests will soon bring them together
again.

Youn. But shall not we be late? The critical senate is
by this time assembled.

Bev. I warrant you, frequent and full; where

Stately Bufo, puff'd by ev'ry quill,

Sits like Apollo, on his forked hill.

But you know I must wait for Miss Lofty; I am now
totally directed by her; she gives me the key to all Sir
Thomas's foibles, and prescribes the most proper method
to feed them; but what good purpose that will pro-
duce——

Youn. Is she clever, adroit?

Bev. Doubtless. I like your asking the question of
me.

Youn. Then pay an implicit obedience: the ladies, in
these cases, generally know what they are about. The
door opens.

Bev. It is Juliet, and with her old Rust. Enter,
Frank: you know the knight, so no introduction is
wanted. [*Exit Younger.*] I should be glad to hear this
reverend piece of lumber make love; the courtship must

certainly be curious. Good manners, stand by; by your leave I will listen a little.

[*Bever retires.*]

Enter Juliet and Rust.

Jul. And your collection is large?

Rust. Most curious and capital! When, Madam, will you give me leave to add your charms to the catalogue?

Jul. O dear! Mr Rust, I shall but disgrace it. Besides, Sir, when I marry, I am resolved to have my husband all to myself: now for the possession of your heart I shall have too many competitors.

Rust. How, Madam? were Prometheus alive, and would animate the Helen that stands in my hall, she should not cost me a sigh.

Jul. Ay, Sir, there lies my greatest misfortune. Had I only those who are alive to contend with, by assiduity, affection, cares, and caresses, I might secure my conquest; though that would be difficult; for I am convinc'd, were you, Mr Rust, put up by Prestige to auction, the Apollo Belvidere would not draw a greater number of bidders.

Rust. Would that were the case, Madam, so I might be thought a proper companion to the Venus de Medicis.

Jul. The flower of rhetoric, and pink of politeness. But my fears are not confined to the living; for every nation and age, even painters and statuarys, conspire against me. Nay, when the pantheon itself, the very goddesses, rise up as my rivals, what chance has a mortal like me? — I shall certainly laugh in his face.

[*Aside.*]

Rust. She is a delicate subject.—Goddeffes, Madam! zooks, had you been on Mount Ida when Paris decided the contest, the Cyprian queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

Jul. Extravagant gallantry.

Rust. In you, Madam, are concenter'd all the beauties of the heathen mythology: the open front of Diana, the lustre of Pallas's eyes—

Jul. Oh, Sir!

Rust. The chromatic music of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebe, the imperial port of queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

Jul. I see, Sir, antiquity has not engross'd all your
at-

finds he can't be belov'd, is to take care he is not heartily hated. There is no other alternative.

Rust. Madam, I sha'n't break my word with Sir Thomas.

Jul. Nor I with myself. So there's an end of our conference. Sir, your very obedient.

Rust. Madam, I, I, don't—that is, let me—But no matter. Your servant. [Exit.]

Jul. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter Bever from behind.

Bev. Ha, ha, ha! Incomparable Juliet? How the old old dotard trembled and totter'd! he could not have been more inflam'd had he been robb'd of his Otho.

Jul. Ay; was ever goddess so familiarly us'd? In my conscience, I began to be afraid that he would treat me as the Indians do their dirty divinities; whenever they are deaf to their prayers, they beat and abuse them.

Bev. But after all, we are in an awkward situation.

Jul. How so?

Bev. I have my fears.

Jul. So have not I.

Bev. Your uncle has resolv'd that you should be marry'd to Rust.

Jul. Ay, he may decree; but it is I that must execute.

Bev. But suppose he has given his word?

Jul. Why then let him recal it again.

Bev. But are you sure you shall have courage enough—

Jul. To say *no*? That requires much resolution, indeed.

Bev. Then I am at the height of my hopes.

Jul. Your hopes! Your hopes and your fears are ill-founded alike.

Bev. Why, you are determined not to be his.

Jul. Well, and what then?

Bev. What then? why, then you will be mine.

Jul. Indeed! and is that the natural consequence; whoever won't be his must be your's? Is that the logic of Oxford?

Bev. Madam, I did flatter myself—

Jul. Then you did very wrong, indeed, Mr Bever:
you

you should ever guard against flattering yourself; for of all dangerous parasites, Self is the worst.

Bev. I am astonish'd!

Jul. Astonish'd! you are mad, I believe! Why, I have not known you a month. It is true, my uncle says your father is his friend; your fortune, in time, will be easy; your figure is not remarkably faulty; and as to your understanding, passable enough for a young fellow who has not seen much of the world: but when one talks of a husband—Lord, 'tis quite another sort of a—Ha, ha, ha! Poor Bever, how he stares! he stands like a statue!

Bev. Statue! Indeed, Madam, I am very near petrified.

Jul. Even then, you will make as good a husband as Rust. But go, run, and join the assembly within: be attentive to every word, motion, and look of my uncle's; be dumb when he speaks, admire all he says, laugh when he smirks, bow when he sneezes; in short, fawn, flatter, and cringe: don't be afraid of overloading his stomach; for the knight has a noble digestion, and you will find some there who will keep you in countenance.

Bev. I fly. So then, Juliet, your intention was only to try—

Jul. Don't plague me with impertinent questions; march; obey my directions. We must leave the issue to chance; a greater friend to mankind than they are willing to own. Oh, if any thing new should occur, you may come into the drawing-room for further instructions.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE, a Room in Sir Thomas Lofty's house.

Sir Thomas, Rust, Puff, Dactyl, and others, discovered sitting.

Sir Tho. Nothing new to-day from Parnassus?

Dac. Not that I hear.

Sir Tho. Nothing critical, philosophical, or political?

Puff. Nothing.

Sir Tho. Then in this disette, this dearth of invention, give me leave, gentlemen, to distribute my stores. I have here in my hand a little smart, satyrical epigram; new, and prettily pointed: in short, a production that Martial himself would not have blush'd to acknowledge:

Rust. Your own, Sir Thomas?

VOL. IV.

I i

Sir

Sir Tho. O fie! no; sent me this morning, anonymous;

Dac. Pray, Sir Thomas, let us have it.

All. By all means; by all means.

Sir Tho. To PHILLIS.

Think'st thou, fond Phillis, Strephon told thee true,

Angels are painted fair, to look like you:

Another story all the town will tell;

Phillis paints fair—to look like an angel.

All. Fine! fine! very fine!

Dac. Such an ease and simplicity!

Puff. The turn so unexpected and quick!

Rust. The satyr so poignant!

Sir Tho. Yes; I think it possesses, in an eminent degree, the three great epigrammatical requisites; brevity, familiarity, and severity.

Phillis paints fair—to look like an angel.

Dac. Happy! Is the Phillis, the subject, a secret?

Sir Tho. Oh, dear me! nothing personal; no: an immediate promptu; a mere *jeu d'esprit*.

Puff. Then, Sir Thomas, the secret is out; it is your own.

Dac. That was obvious enough.

Puff. Who is there else could have wrote it?

Rust. True, true.

Sir Tho. The name of the author is needless. So it is an acquisition to the republic of letters, any gentleman may claim the merit that will.

Puff. What a noble contempt!

Dac. What greatness of mind!

Rust. Scipio and Lælius were the Roman Loftys. Why, I dare believe Sir Thomas has been the making of half the authors in town: he is, as I may say, the great manufacturer; the other poets are but pedlars, that live by retailing his wares.

All. Ha, ha, ha! well observ'd, Mr Rust.

Sir Tho. Ha, ha, ha! *Molle atque facetum*. Why, to pursue the metaphor, if Sir Thomas Lofty was to call in his poetical debts, I believe there would be a good many bankrupts in the Muse's Gazette.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Tho. But, a-propos, gentlemen; with regard to the eclipse: you found my calculation exact?

Dac.

- *Dac.* To a digit.
- *Sir Tho.* Total darkness, indeed! and birds going to roost! These philomaths, those almanack-makers, are the most ignorant rascals—
- *Puff.* It is amazing where Sir Thomas Lofty stores all his knowledge.
- *Dac.* It is wonderful how the mind of man can contain it.
- *Sir Tho.* Why, to tell you the truth, that circumstance has a good deal engag'd my attention; and I believe you will admit my method of solving the phenomenon philosophical and ingenious enough.
- *Puff.* Without question.
- *All.* Doubtless.
- *Sir Tho.* I suppose, gentlemen, my memory, or mind, to be a chest of drawers, a kind of bureau; where, in separate cellules, my different knowledge on different subjects is stor'd.
- *Ruff.* A prodigious discovery!
- *All.* Amazing!
- *Sir Tho.* To this cabinet, volition, or will, has a key; so when an arduous subject occurs, I unlock my bureau, pull out the particular drawer, and am supplied with what I want in an instant.
- *Dac.* A Malbranch!
- *Puff.* A Boyle!
- *All.* A Locke!

Enter Servant.

• *Ser.* Mr Bever.

[*Exit.*

Sir Tho. A young gentleman from Oxford, recommended to my care by his father. The university has given him a good solid Doric foundation; and when he has receiv'd from you a few Tuscan touches, the Ionic and Corinthian graces, I make no doubt but he will prove a Composite pillar to the republic of letters. [*Enter Bever.*] This, Sir, is the school from whence so many capital masters have issued; the river that enriches the regions of science.

Dac. Of which river, Sir Thomas, you are the source; here we quaff: *Et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.*

Sir Tho. *Purpureo!* Delicate, indeed; Mr Dactyl! Do you hear, Mr Bever? *Bibimus ore nectar.* You, young

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gentle-

gentleman, must be instructed to quote; nothing gives a period more spirit than a happy quotation, nor has indeed a finer effect at the head of an essay. Poor Dick Steel! I have oblig'd him with many a motto for his fugitive pieces.

Puff. Ay; and with the contents too, or Sir Richard is foully bely'd.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir Roger Dowlas.

Sir Tho. Pray desire him to enter. [*Exit Servant.*]
Sir Roger, gentlemen, is a considerable East-India proprietor; and seems desirous of collecting from this learned assembly some rhetorical flowers, which he hopes to strew with honour to himself and advantage to the company, at Merchant-Taylors Hall. [*Enter Sir Roger Dowlas.*]
Sir Roger, be seated. This gentleman has, in common with the greatest orator the world ever saw, a small natural infirmity; he stutters a little: but I have prescrib'd the same remedy that Demosthenes us'd, and don't despair of a radical cure. Well, Sir, have you digested those general rules?

Sir Rog. Pr—ett—y well, I am obli—g'd to you, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Have you been regular in taking your tincture of sage, to give you confidence for speaking in public?

Sir Rog. Y—es, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Did you open at the last general court?

Sir Rog. I attem—p—ted fo—ur or fi—ve times,

Sir Tho. What hinder'd your progress?

Sir Rog. The pe—b—bles.

Sir Tho. Oh, the pebbles in his mouth. But they are only put in to practise in private; you should take them out when you are addressing the public.

Sir Rog. Yes; I will for the fu—ture.

Sir Tho. Well, Mr Rust, you had a tete-a-tete with my niece. A—propos, Mr Bever, here offers a fine occasion for you; we shall take the liberty to trouble your Muse on their nuptials: O Love! O Hymen! here prune thy purple wings; trim thy bright torch. Hey, Mr Bever?

Bev. My talents are at Sir Thomas Lofty's direction; tho' I must despair of producing any performance worthy

thy the attention of so complete a judge of the elegant arts.

Sir Tho. Too modest, good Mr Bever. Well, Mr Rust, any new acquisition, since our last meeting, to your matchless collection?

Rust. Why, Sir Thomas, I have both lost and gain'd since I saw you.

Sir Tho. Lost! I am sorry for that.

Rust. The curious sarcophagus, that was sent me from Naples by Signor Belloni—

Sir Tho. You mean the urn that was supposed to contain the dust of Agrippa?

Rust. Supposed! no doubt but it did.

Sir Tho. I hope no sinister accident to that inestimable relic of Rome?

Rust. 'Tis gone.

Sir Tho. Gone! oh, miserable! what, stolen I suppose by some connoisseur?

Rust. Worse, worse! a prey, a martyr to ignorance: a housemaid that I hir'd last week mistook it for a broken green chamber-pot, and sent it away in the dust-cart.

Sir Tho. She merits impaling. Oh, the Hun!

Dac. The Vandal!

All. The Visigoth!

Rust. But I have this day acquir'd a treasure that will in some measure make me amends.

Sir Tho. Indeed! what can that be?

Puff. That must be something curious; indeed.

Rust. It has cost me infinite trouble to get it.

Dac. Great rarities are not to be had without pains.

Rust. It is three months ago since I got the first scent of it; and I had been ever since on the hunt, but all to no purpose.

Sir Tho. I am quite upon thorns till I see it.

Rust. And yesterday, when I had given it over, when all my hopes were grown desperate, it fell into my hands by the most unexpected and wonderful accident.

Sir Tho. *Quod optanti divum promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro.*

Mr Bever, you remark my quotation?

Bev. Most happy. Oh, Sir, nothing you say can be lost.

Ruff. I have brought it here in my pocket; I am no churl; I love to pleasure my friends.

Sir Tho. You are, Mr Ruff, extremely obliging.

All. Very kind, very obliging indeed.

Ruff. It was not much hurt by the fire.

Sir Tho. Very fortunate.

Ruff. The edges are soil'd by the link, but many of the letters are exceedingly legible.

Sir Rog. A li—ttle roo—m, if you p—lease.

Ruff. Here it is; the precious remains of the very North-Briton that was burnt at the Royal-Exchange.

Sir Tho. Number Forty-five?

Ruff. The same.

Bev. You are a lucky man, Mr Ruff.

Ruff. I think so. But, gentlemen, I hope I need not give you a caution: hush—silence—no words on this matter.

Dac. You may depend upon us.

Ruff. For as the paper has not suffer'd the law, I don't know whether they may not seize it again.

Sir Tho. With us you are safe, Mr Ruff. Well, young gentleman, you see we cultivate all branches of science.

Bev. Amazing, indeed! But when we consider you, Sir Thomas, as the directing, the ruling planet, our wonder subsides in an instant. Science first saw the day with Socrates in the Attic portico; her early years were spent with Tully in the Tusculan shade; but her ripe, maturer hours, she enjoys with Sir Thomas Lofty near Caven-dish-square.

Sir Tho. The most classical compliment I ever receiv'd! Gentlemen, a philosophical repast attends your acceptance within. Sir Roger, you'll lead the way. [*Exeunt all but Sir Thomas and Bever.*] Mr Bever, may I beg your ear for a moment? Mr Bever, the friendship I have for your father, secured you, at first, a gracious reception from me; but what I then paid to an old obligation, is now, Sir, due to your own particular merit.

Bev. I am happy, Sir Thomas, if—

Sir Tho. Your patience. There is in you, Mr Bever, a fire of imagination, a quickness of apprehension, a so-
lidity

Edity of judgment, join'd to a depth of discretion, that I never yet met with in any subject at your time of life.

Bev. I hope I shall never forfeit—

Sir Tho. I am sure you never will; and to give you a convincing proof that I think so, I am now going to trust you with the most important secret of my whole life.

Bev. Your confidence does me great honour.

Sir Tho. But this must be on a certain condition.

Bev. Name it.

Sir Tho. That you give me your solemn promise to comply with one request I shall make you.

Bev. There is nothing Sir Thomas Lofty can ask that I shall not cheerfully grant.

Sir Tho. Nay, in fact, it will be serving yourself.

Bev. I want no such inducement.

Sir Tho. Enough. But we can't be too private. [*Shuts the door.*] Sit you down. Your Christian name, I think, is—

Bev. Richard.

Sir Tho. True; the same as your father's: come, let us be familiar. It is, I think, dear Dick, acknowledg'd, that the English have reach'd the highest pitch of perfection in every department of writing but one—the dramatic.

Bev. Why, the French critics are a little severe.

Sir Tho. And with reason. Now, to rescue our credit, and at the same time give my country a model, [*Shows a manuscript,*] see here.

Bev. A play?

Sir Tho. A *chef d'œuvre*.

Bev. Your own?

Sir Tho. Speak lower. I am the author.

Bev. Nay, then there can be no doubt of its merit.

Sir Tho. I think, not. You will be charm'd with the subject.

Bev. What is it, Sir Thomas?

Sir Tho. I shall surprise you. The story of Robinson Crusoe. Are not you struck?

Bev. Most prodigiously!

Sir Tho. Yes;—I knew the very title would hit you. You will find the whole fable is finely conducted; and
the

the character of Friday, *qualis ab incepto*, nobly supported throughout.

Bev. A pretty difficult task.

Sir Tho. True; that was not a bow for a boy. The piece has long been in rehearsal at Drury-Lane play-house, and this night is to make its appearance.

Bev. To-night?

Sir Tho. This night.

Bev. I will attend, and engage all my friends to support it.

Sir Tho. That is not my purpose; the piece will want no such assistance.

Bev. I beg pardon.

Sir Tho. The manager of that house, (who, you know, is a writer himself), finding all the anonymous things he produc'd (indeed some of them wretched enough, and very unworthy of him) plac'd to his account by the public, is determin'd to exhibit no more without knowing the name of the author.

Bev. A reasonable caution.

Sir Tho. Now, upon my promise (for I appear to patronize the play) to announce the author before the curtain draws up, Robinson Crusoe is advertis'd for this evening.

Bev. Oh, then you will acknowledge the piece to be your's.

Sir Tho. No.

Bev. How then?

Sir Tho. My design is to give it to you.

Bev. To me!

Sir Tho. To you.

Bev. What, me the author of Robinson Crusoe?

Sir Tho. Ay.

Bev. Lord, Sir Thomas, it will never gain credit: so complete a production the work of a stripling! Besides, Sir, as the merit is your's, why rob yourself of the glory?

Sir Tho. I am entirely indifferent to that.

Bev. Then why take the trouble?

Sir Tho. My fondness for letters, and love of my country. Besides, dear Dick, though the *pauci & selecti*, the chosen few, know the full value of a performance like this,

this, yet the ignorant, the profane (by much the majority) will be apt to think it an occupation ill suited to my time of life,

Bev. Their censure is praise.

Sir Tho. Doubtless. But indeed my principal motive is my friendship for you. You are now a candidate for literary honours, and I am determin'd to fix your fame on an immoveable basis.

Bev. You are most excessively kind; but there is something so disingenuous in stealing reputation from another man.

Sir Tho. Idle, punctilio!

Bev. It puts me so in mind of the daw in the fable.

Sir Tho. Come, come, dear Dick, I won't suffer your modesty to murder your fame. But the company will suspect something; we will join them, and proclaim you the author. There, keep the copy; to you I consign it for ever; it shall be a secret to latest posterity. You will be smother'd with praise by our friends; they shall all in their bark to the playhouse; and there,

Attendant fail,

Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale.

[*Exeunt*]

A C T III.

Enter BEVER, reading.

SO ends the first act. Come, now for the second. "Act the second, showing,"—the coxcomb has prefac'd every act with an argument too, in humble imitation, I warrant, of *Monf. Diderot*—"Showing the fatal effects of disobedience to parents:" with, I suppose, the diverting scene of a gibbet; an entertaining subject for comedy. And the blockhead is as prolix; every scene as long as a homily. Let's see; how does this end? "Exit *Crusoe*, and enter some savages dancing a saraband." There's no bearing this abominable trash. [*Enter Juliet.*] So, Madam; thanks to your advice and direction, I am got into a fine situation.

Jul. What is the matter now, Mr Bever?

Bev. The *Robinson Crusoe*.

Jul. Oh, the play that is to be acted to-night. How secret

secret you were! Who in the world would have guess'd you was the author?

Bev. Me, Madam!

Jul. Your title is odd; but to a genius every subject is good.

Bev. You are inclin'd to be pleasant.

Jul. Within they have been all prodigious loud in the praise of your piece; but I think my uncle rather more eager than any.

Bev. He has reason; for fatherly fondness goes far.

Jul. I don't understand you.

Bev. You don't!

Jul. No.

Bev. Nay, Juliet, this is too much; you know it is none of my play.

Jul. Whose then?

Bev. Your uncle's.

Jul. My uncle's! Then how, in the name of wonder, came you to adopt it?

Bev. At his earnest request. I may be a fool; but remember, Madam, you are the cause.

Jul. This is strange; but I can't conceive what his motive could be.

Bev. His motive is obvious enough; to screen himself from the infamy of being the author.

Jul. What, is it bad, then?

Bev. Bad! most infernal!

Jul. And you have consented to own it?

Bev. Why, what could I do? He in a manner compell'd me.

Jul. I am extremely glad of it.

Bev. Glad of it! Why, I tell you 'tis the most dull, tedious, melancholy—

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. The most flat piece of frippery that ever Grubstreet produc'd.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. It will be damn'd before the third act.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev. And I shall be hooted and pointed at wherever I go.

Jul. So much the better.

Bev.

Bev. So much the better! Zounds! so, I suppose, you would say if I was going to be hang'd. Do you call this a mark of your friendship?

Jul. Ah, Bever, Bever! you are a miserable politician: do you know, now, that this is the luckiest incident that ever occurred?

Bev. Indeed!

Jul. It could not have been better laid, had we plann'd it ourselves.

Bev. You will pardon my want of conception; but these are riddles.

Jul. That at present I have not time to explain. But what makes you loit'ring here? Past six o'clock, as I live! Why, your play is begun; run, run to the house. Was ever author so little anxious for the fate of his piece!

Bev. My piece!

Jul. Sir Thomas! I know by his walk. Fly; and pray all the way for the fall of your play. And do you hear, if you find the audience too indulgent, inclin'd to be milky, rather than fail, squeeze in a little acid yourself. Oh, Mr Bever, at your return let me see you before you go to my uncle; that is, if you have the good luck to be damn'd.

Bev. You need not doubt that.

[Exit.

Enter Sir Thomas Lofty.

Sir Tho. So, Juliet; was not that Mr Bever?

Jul. Yes, Sir.

Sir Tho. He is rather tardy; by this time his cause is come on. And how is the young gentleman affected? for this is a trying occasion.

Jul. He seems pretty certain, Sir.

Sir Tho. Indeed I think he has very little reason for fear. I confess I admire the piece, and feel as much for its fate as if the work was my own.

Jul. That I most sincerely believe. I wonder, Sir, you did not choose to be present.

Sir Tho. Better not. My affections are strong, Juliet, and my nerves but tenderly strung; however, intelligent people are planted, who will bring me, every act, a faithful account of the process.

Jul. That will answer your purpose as well.

Sir

Sir Tho. Indeed I am passionately fond of the arts, and therefore can't help—Did not somebody knock? No. My good girl, will you step, and take care that when any body comes, the servants may not be out of the way? [*Exit Juliet.*] Five-and-thirty minutes past six; by this time the first act must be over: John will be presently here. I think it can't fail; yet there is so much whim and caprice in the public opinion, that—This young man is unknown; they'll give him no credit. I had better have own'd it myself: reputation goes a great way in these matters; people are afraid to find fault; they are cautious in censuring the works of a man who—Hush! that's he: no; 'tis only the shutters. After all, I think I have chosen the best way; for if it succeeds to the degree I expect, it will be easy to circulate the real name of the author; if it fails, I am conceal'd; my fame suffers—no—There he is. [*Loud knocking.*] I can't conceive what kept him so long. [*Enter John.*] So, John; well; and—but you have been a monstrous while.

John. Sir, I was wedg'd so close in the pit, that I could scarcely get out.

Sir Tho. The house was full, then?

John. As an egg, Sir.

Sir Tho. That's right. Well, John, and did matters go swimmingly? Hey?

John. Exceedingly well, Sir.

Sir Tho. Exceedingly well. I don't doubt it. What, vast clapping and roars of applause, I suppose.

John. Very well, Sir.

Sir Tho. Very well, Sir! You are damn'd costive, I think. But did not the pit and boxes thunder again?

John. I can't say there was over-much thunder.

Sir Tho. No! Oh, attentive, I reckon. Ay, attention; that is the true, solid, substantial applause. All else may be purchas'd; hands move as they are bid: but when the audience is hush'd, still, afraid of losing a word, then—

John. Yes, they were very quiet, indeed, Sir.

Sir Tho. I like them the better, John; a strong mark of their great sensibility. Did you see Robin?

John. Yes, Sir; he'll be here in a trice; I left him list'ning

lift'ning at the back of the boxes, and charg'd him to make all the haste home that he could.

Sir Tho. That's right, John; very well; your account pleases me much, honest John. [*Exit John.*] No, I did not expect the first act would produce any prodigious effect. And, after all, the first act is but a mere introduction; just opens the business, the plot, and gives a little insight into the characters; so that if you but engage and interest the house, it is as much as the best writer can flatter—[*Knocking without.*] Gadso! what, Robin already? why the fellow has the feet of a Mercury. [*Enter Robin.*] Well, Robin; and what news do you bring?

Rob. I, I, I—

Sir Tho. Stop, Robin, and recover your breath. Now, Robin.

Rob. There has been a woundy uproar below.

Sir Tho. An uproar! what, at the playhouse?

Rob. Ay.

Sir Tho. At what?

Rob. I don't know: belike at the words the playfolk were talking.

Sir Tho. At the players! How can that be? Oh, now I begin to perceive. Poor fellow, he knows but little of plays: What, Robin, I suppose, hallooing, and clapping, and knocking of ticks.

Rob. Hallooing! Ay, and hooting too.

Sir Tho. And hooting!

Rob. Ay, and hissing to boot.

Sir Tho. Hissing! you must be mistaken.

Rob. By the mass, but I am not.

Sir Tho. Impossible! Oh, most likely some drunken disorderly fellows that were disturbing the house, and interrupting the play; too common a case; the people were right, they deserv'd a rebuke. Did not you hear them cry, Out, out, out!

Rob. No; that was not the cry; 'twas, Off, off, off!

Sir Tho. That was a whimsical noise. Zounds! that must be the players. Did you observe nothing else?

Rob. Belike the quarrel first began between the gentry and a black-a-moor man.

Sir Tho. With Friday! The public taste is debauch'd; honest nature is too plain and simple for their vitiated

palates! [*Enter Juliet.*] Juliet, Robin brings me the strangest account; some little disturbance; but I suppose it was soon settled again. Oh, but here comes Mr Staytape my taylor; he is a rational being; we shall be able to make something of him. [*Enter Staytape.*] So, Staytape; what, is the third act over already?

Stay. Over, Sir! no; nor never will be.

Sir Tho. What do you mean?

Stay. Cut short.

Sir Tho. I don't comprehend you.

Stay. Why, Sir, the poet has made a mistake in measuring the taste of the town: the goods, it seems, did not fit; so they return'd them upon the gentleman's hands.

Sir Tho. Rot your affectation and quaintness, you puppy! speak plain.

Stay. Why then, Sir, Robinson Crusoe is dead.

Sir Tho. Dead!

Stay. Aye; and what is worse, will never rise any more. You will soon have all the particulars; for there were four or five of your friends close at my heels.

Sir Tho. Staytape, Juliet, run and stop them. Say I am gone out; I am sick; I am engag'd: but whatever you do, be sure you don't let Bever come in. Secure of the victory, I invited them to the celebr—

Stay. Sir, they are here.

Sir Tho. Confound—

Enter Puff, Dactyl, and Rust.

Rust. Aye, truly, Mr Puff, this is but a bitter beginning; then the young man must turn himself to some other trade.

Puff. Servant, Sir Thomas; I suppose you have heard the news of—

Sir Tho. Yes, yes; I have been told it before.

Dac. I confess, I did not suspect it; but there is no knowing what effect these things will have till they come on the stage.

Rust. For my part, I don't know much of these matters; but a couple of gentlemen near me, who seem'd sagacious enough too, declar'd, that it was the vilest stuff
they

they ever had heard, and wonder'd the players would act it.

Dac. Yes: I don't remember to have seen a more general dislike.

Puff. I was thinking to ask you, Sir Thomas, for your interest with Mr Bever, about buying the copy; but now no mortal would read it. Lord, Sir, it would not pay for paper and printing.

Ruff. I remember, Kennet, in his Roman antiquities; mentions a play of Terence's, Mr Dactyl, that was terribly treated; but that he attributes to the peoples fondness for certain *funambuli*, or rope-dancers; but I have not lately heard of any famous tumblers in town: Sir Thomas, have you?

Sir Tho. How should I? do you suppose I trouble my head about tumblers?

Ruff. Nay, I did not—

Bev. [*speaking without.*] Not to be spoke with! Don't tell me, Sir; he must, he shall.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever's voice. If he is admitted in his present disposition, the whole secret will certainly out. Gentlemen, some affairs of a most interesting nature makes it impossible for me to have the honour of your company to-night; therefore I beg you would be so good as to—

Ruff. Affairs! no bad news? I hope Miss Julé is well.

Sir Tho. Very well; but I am most exceedingly—

Ruff. I shall only just stay to see Mr Bever: poor lad! he will be most horribly down in the mouth; a little comfort won't come amiss.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever, Sir! you won't see him here.

Ruff. Not here! why I thought I heard his voice but just now.

Sir Tho. You are mistaken, Mr Ruff; but—

Ruff. May be so; then we will go. Sir Thomas, my compliments of condolence, if you please, to the poet.

Sir Tho. Ay, Ay.

Dac. And mine; for I suppose we shan't see him soon.

Puff. Poor gentleman! I warrant he won't show his head for these six months.

Ruff. Ay, ay : indeed I am very sorry for him ; so tell him, Sir.

Dac. and Pass. So are we.

Ruff. Sir Thomas, your servant. Come, gentlemen. By all this confusion in Sir Thomas, there must be something more in the wind than I know ; but I will watch, I am resolv'd. [*Exeunt.*

Bev. [*without.*] Rascals, stand by ! I must, I will see him.

Enter Bever.

So, Sir ; this is delicate treatment, after all I have suffer'd.

Sir Tho. Mr Bever, I hope you don't—that is——

Bev. Well, Sir Thomas Lofty, what think you now of your Robinson Crusoe ? a pretty performance !

Sir Tho. Think, Mr Bever ! I think the public are blockheads ; a tasteless, stupid, ignorant tribe ; and a man of genius deserves to be damn'd who writes any thing for them. But courage, dear Dick ; the principals will give you what the people refuse ; the closet will do you that justice the stage has deny'd : Print your play.

Bev. My play ! Zounds, Sir, 'tis your own.

Sir Tho. Speak lower, dear Dick ; be moderate, my good, dear lad !

Bev. Oh, Sir Thomas, you may be easy enough ; you are safe and secure, remov'd far from that precipice that has dash'd me to pieces.

Sir Tho. Dear Dick, don't believe it will hurt you : the critics, the real judges, will discover in that piece such excellent talents——

Bev. No, Sir Thomas, no. I shall neither flatter you nor myself ; I have acquir'd a right to speak what I think. Your play, Sir, is a wretched performance ; and in this opinion all mankind are united.

Sir Tho. May be not.

Bev. If your piece had been greatly receiv'd, I would have declar'd Sir Thomas Lofty the author ; if coldly, I would have own'd it myself ; but such disgraceful, such contemptible treatment !—I own the burden is too heavy for me ; so, Sir, you must bear it yourself.

Sir Tho. Me, dear Dick ! what, to become ridiculous

lous in the decline of my life ; to destroy, in one hour, the fame that forty years has been building ! that was the prop, the support of my age ! Can you be cruel enough to desire it ?

Bev. Zounds ! Sir, and why must I be your crutch ? Would you have me become a voluntary victim. No, Sir, this cause does not merit a martyrdom.

Sir Tho. I own myself greatly oblig'd ; but persevere, dear Dick, persevere ; you have time to recover your fame ; I beg it with tears in my eyes. Another play will—

Bev. No, Sir Thomas ; I have done with the stage ; the muses and I meet no more.

Sir Tho. Nay, there are various roads open in life.

Bev. Not one where your piece won't pursue me : If I go to the bar, the ghost of this curst comedy will follow, and hunt me in Westminster-hall. Nay, when I die, it will stick to my memory, and I shall be handed down to posterity with the author of *Love in a Hollow Tree*.

Sir Tho. Then marry : You are a pretty smart figure : and your poetical talents—

Bev. And what fair would admit of my suit, or family wish to receive me ? Make the case your own, Sir Thomas ; would you ?

Sir Tho. With infinite pleasure.

Bev. Then give me your niece ; her hands shall seal up my lips.

Sir Tho. What, Juliet ? Willingly. But are you serious ? Do you really admire the girl ?

Bev. Beyond what words can express. It was by her advice I consented to father your play.

Sir Tho. What, is Juliet appriz'd ? Here Robin, John, run and call my niece hither this moment. That giddy baggage will blab all in an instant.

Bev. You are mistaken ; she is wiser than you are aware of.

Enter Juliet.

Sir Tho. Oh, Juliet ! you know what has happen'd ?

Jul. I do, Sir.

Sir Tho. Have you reveal'd this unfortunate secret ?

Jul. To no mortal, Sir Thomas.

Sir

Sir Tho. Come, give me your hand. Mr Bever, child, for my sake, has renounced the stage, and the whole republic of letters; in return, I owe him your hand.

Jul. My hand! what, to a poet hooted, hissed, and exploded! You must pardon me, Sir.

Sir Tho. Juliet, a trifle! The most they can say of him is, that he is a little wanting in wit; and he has so many brother-writers to keep him in countenance, that now-a-days that is no reflection at all.

Jul. Then, Sir, your engagement to Mr Rust.

Sir Tho. I have found out the rascal; he has been more impertinently severe on my play than all the rest put together; so that I am determined he shall be none of the man.

Enter Rust.

Rust. Are you so, Sir? what, then, I am to be sacrific'd, in order to preserve the secret that you are a blockhead: but you are out in your politics; before night it shall be known in all the coffee-houses in town.

Sir Tho. For heaven's sake, Mr Rust!

Rust. And to-morrow I will paragraph you in every newspaper; you shall no longer impose on the world; I will unmask you; the lion's skin shall hide you no longer.

Sir Tho. Juliet! Mr Bever! what can I do?

Bev. Sir Thomas, let me manage this matter. Har-kee, old gentleman, a word in your ear? you remember what you have in your pocket?

Rust. Hey! how! what!

Bev. The curiosity that has cost you so much pains.

Rust. What, my Æneas! my precious reliçt of Troy!

Bev. You must give up that or the lady.

Jul. How, Mr Bever?

Bev. Never fear; I am sure of my man.

Rust. Let me consider. As to the girl, girls are plenty enough; I can marry whenever I will: But my paper, my phoenix, that springs fresh from the flames, that can never be match'd.—Take her.

Bev. And as you love your own secret, be careful of ours.

Rust. I am dumb.

Sir Tho. Now, Juliet.

Jul.

Jul. You join me, Sir, to an unfortunate bard; but,
to procure your peace—

Sir Tho. You oblige me for ever. Now the secret dies
with us four. My fault. I owe him much.

Be it your care to shew it;
And blest the man tho' I have damn'd the poet.

BUCKS, HAVE AT YE ALL:

O R,

THE PICTURE OF A PLAY-HOUSE.

By DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

Spoken by Mr WARD,

At the THEATRE-ROYAL, EDINBURGH, 1783.

YE social friends of claret and of wit,
Where'er dispers'd in merry groups ye sit;
Whether below ye glide the glittering scene,
Or in the upper regions oft have been;
Ye bucks assembled at your Ranger's call,
Damme, I know ye—and have at ye all!
The motive here that sets our bucks on fire,
The generous wish, the first and last desire;
If you will plaud its echo to renown,
Or urg'd with fury tear the benches down;
'Tis still the same—to one bright goal we haste,
To show your judgment and approve your taste.
'Tis not in nature for ye to be quiet:
No, demme, bucks exist but in a riot.

For

392 BUCKS, HAVE AT YE ALL.

For instance now—to please the ear and charm th' admiring crowd,
 Your bucks o' the boxes sneer and talk aloud :
 To the green box next with joyous speed you run,
 Hilly-ho! ho! my bucks! well, damn it, what's the fun?
 Tho' Shakespeare speaks—regardless of the play,
 Ye laugh and loll the sprightly hours away:
 For to seem sensible of real merit,
 O damme, 'tis low, 'tis vulgar—beneath us lads of spirit.
 Your bucks o' the pit are miracles of learning,
 Who point out faults to show their own discerning ;
 And critic-like bestriding martyr'd sense,
 Proclaim their genius and vast consequence.
 The sidelong row, whose keener views of bliss
 Are chiefly center'd in a favourite miss ;
 A set of jovial bucks who here resort,
 Flush'd from the tavern, reeling, ripe for sport,
 Wak'd from their dream oft join the general roar,
 With bravo, bravo—bravissimo, eh damme, encore !
 Or, skipping that, behold another row,
 Supply'd by citizens, or smiling beau ;
 Addressing Miss, whose cardinal protection
 Keeps her quite safe from rancorous detraction ;
 Whose lively eyes beneath a down-drawn hat,
 Gives hint she loves a little—you know what.
 Ye bucks above, who range like gods at large—
 Nay, pray, don't grin, but listen to your charge—
 You who design to change this scene of raillery,
 And out-talk players in the upper-gallery ;
 Oh there's a youth, and one o' the sprightly sort—
 I don't mean you—damme, you've no features for't—
 Who sily skulks to hidden station
 (While players follow their vocation).
 Whistle off off off? Nosee roast-beef—there's education.
 Now I've explor'd this mimic world quite through,
 And set each country's little faults to view :
 In the right sense receive the well-meant jest,
 And keep the moral still within your breast ;
 Convinc'd I'd not in heart or tongue offend,
 Your hands acquit me, and I've gain'd my end.

END OF VOLUME FOURTH.







